

The hVPS34-SGK3 signalling module counteracts inhibition of the PI3K-Akt pathway to stimulate mTORC1 and tumour growth

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Key Words

Protein kinase inhibitors; signal transduction inhibitors; PI3K and NDRG1, SGK3, NanoString, mTORC1, mTORC2

Abbreviations

mTOR (mammalian target of rapamycin), NDRG1 (N-myc downstream-regulated gene-1), PC (phosphatidylcholine), PS (phosphatidylserine), PtdIns (phosphatidylinositol), PtdIns(3)P (phosphatidylinositol-3-phosphate), PDK1 (Phosphoinositide-Dependent Kinase-1), PI3K (Phosphoinositide 3-kinase), PH (pleckstrin homology), PRAS40 (proline-rich Akt substrate 40 kDa), PX (phox homology), SGK3 (serum and glucocorticoid regulated kinase-3), hVps34 (human Vacuolar protein sorting 34)

Abstract

We explore mechanisms that enable cancer cells to tolerate PI3K or Akt inhibitors. Prolonged treatment of breast cancer cells with PI3K or Akt inhibitors leads to increased expression and activation of a kinase termed SGK3 that is related to Akt. Under these conditions, SGK3 is controlled by hVps34 that generates PtdIns(3)P, which binds to the PX domain of SGK3 promoting phosphorylation and activation by its upstream PDK1 activator. Furthermore, under conditions of prolonged PI3K/Akt pathway inhibition, SGK3 substitutes for Akt by phosphorylating TSC2 to activate mTORC1. We characterise 14h, a compound that inhibits both SGK3 activity and activation in vivo and show that a combination of Akt and SGK inhibitors induced marked regression of BT-474 breast cancer cell derived tumours in a xenograft model. Finally, we present the kinome-wide analysis of mRNA expression dynamics induced by PI3K-Akt inhibition. Our findings highlight the importance of the hVps34-SGK3 pathway and suggest it represents a mechanism to counteract inhibition of PI3K/Akt signalling. The data support the potential of targeting both Akt and SGK as a cancer therapeutic.

Introduction

The majority of human tumours harbour mutations promoting inappropriate activation of the Akt kinase and therefore inhibitors of Akt and its upstream activators including Class I PI3K are being evaluated in many cancer clinical trials (Bauer et al, 2015; Liu et al, 2009; Vanhaesebroeck et al, 2012). Despite the benefit observed with these molecules, drug resistance can emerge as a result of adaptive mechanisms limiting the use of these therapies (Rodon et al, 2013). Therefore, understanding and reverting mechanisms of resistance to PI3K/Akt inhibitors is expected to improve the success of the treatment.

The Class I PI3K family (p110 α , p110 β , p110 γ and p110 δ), is activated in response to extracellular stimuli and phosphorylates the 3'-hydroxyl group of the inositol moiety of membrane bound phosphatidylinositol 4,5 bisphosphate (PtdIns (4,5)P₂) to generate PtdIns(3,4,5)P₃ (Cantley, 2002; Vanhaesebroeck et al, 2001). PtdIns(3,4,5)P₃ and its immediate breakdown product PtdIns(3,4)P₂, recruit Akt and its upstream regulator phosphoinositide-dependent kinase 1 (PDK1) to the plasma membrane via their PtdIns(3,4,5)P₃/PtdIns(3,4)P₂-binding PH domains (Mora et al, 2004). This induces a conformational change in Akt enabling PDK1 to phosphorylate its T-loop Thr308 residue (Alessi et al, 1997a; Alessi et al, 1997b; Stephens et al, 1998; Stokoe et al, 1997). Akt is fully activated following phosphorylation by mTORC2 (mammalian target of rapamycin complex-2) at the hydrophobic motif Ser473 residue that lies within the C-terminal non-catalytic region (Sarbasov et al, 2005). Ser473 phosphorylation also promotes interaction of Akt with PDK1 enhancing phosphorylation of Thr308 (Najafov et al, 2012). A recent study has suggested that PtdIns(3,4,5)P₃ stimulates Ser473 phosphorylation by binding to the PH domain of the mTORC2 complex Sin1 subunit (Liu et al, 2015).

Although the focus has been on the role that Akt isoforms play in mediating proliferation responses that are controlled by Class I PI3Ks, increasing evidence is accumulating that isoforms of serum and glucocorticoid regulated kinases (SGK) which share ~50% identity within their catalytic domains to Akt, also control proliferation and survival responses in cancer cells (Bago et al, 2014; Bruhn et al, 2010; Bruhn et al, 2013; Gasser et al, 2014; Pearce et al, 2010; Vasudevan et al, 2009). Although SGK1 and SGK2 isoforms lack a PH domain they are still activated by Class I PI3Ks (Kobayashi & Cohen, 1999; Kobayashi et al, 1999) through their ability to induce hydrophobic motif phosphorylation via mTORC2, which in turn triggers phosphorylation of the T-loop residue by PDK1 (Biondi et al, 2001; Collins et al, 2003; Collins et al, 2005). SGK and Akt kinases possess similar substrate specificities with both enzymes preferring to phosphorylate Ser/Thr residues lying within Arg-Xaa-Arg-Xaa-Xaa-Ser/Thr (where Xaa is any amino acid) motifs (Alessi et al, 1996; Murray et al, 2005). Consistent with this, several Akt substrates including FOXO transcription factors (Brunet et al, 2001), GSK3 (Dai et al, 2002; Kobayashi & Cohen, 1999) and NDRG1 (Sommer et al, 2013) are similarly phosphorylated by SGK1. It is therefore likely that in tumours displaying activated PI3K signalling, both Akt1/2 and SGK1/SGK2 would be elevated and stimulate proliferation by phosphorylating an overlapping subset of substrates. The sensitivity of a group of breast cancer cell lines possessing mutations that activate the PI3K pathway to

Akt inhibitors has been correlated with the expression of SGK1 in cell lines including ZR-75-1, CAMA-1 and T47D (utilised in this study). Interestingly, these lines all contain low endogenous SGK1 levels and are intrinsically more sensitive to Akt inhibitors than cells that express higher levels of SGK1 (Sommer et al, 2013).

In contrast to other SGK isoforms, SGK3 possesses an N-terminal PtdIns(3)P binding PX domain (Bago et al, 2014; Virbasius et al, 2001) and is the only known kinase to possess a PtdIns(3)P interaction domain (Pearce et al, 2010). SGK3 associates with endosome membranes, where the Class III PI3K family member termed hVps34 phosphorylates PtdIns to generate a large fraction of the cellular pool of PtdIns(3)P (Backer, 2008; Bago et al, 2014; Gillooly et al, 2000). Mutations within the SGK3 PX domain that ablate PtdIns(3)P binding or treatment of cells with a hVps34 inhibitor to reduce PtdIns(3)P levels, blocked SGK3 endosomal localisation and also suppressed SGK3 activity, by lowering phosphorylation of T-loop and hydrophobic motifs (Bago et al, 2014).

In the present study we demonstrate that prolonged treatment of several breast cancer cell lines (ZR-75-1, CAMA-1, T47D and BT-474c) harbouring mutations that activate the Akt signalling pathway with inhibitors of Class I PI3K or Akt, lead to marked upregulation of SGK3 mRNA, and subsequent activation of the SGK3 protein kinase. Employing structurally diverse specific hVps34 inhibitors (VPS34-IN1 and SAR405), we establish that SGK3 activation induced by prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors is controlled by hVps34. Mechanistic studies reveal that PtdIns(3)P binding to the PX domain of SGK3, promotes phosphorylation and activation by its upstream PDK1 activator. Moreover, we show that following prolonged inhibition of the PI3K-Akt pathway, SGK3 could substitute for Akt and promote activation of mTORC1 and hence S6K1 by phosphorylating TSC2 at the same sites as Akt. We discover that a previously reported SGK1 inhibitor termed 14h (Halland et al, 2015), also potently inhibits SGK3 (IC₅₀ of 4 nM) with 2.5-fold higher potency than SGK1 and in addition blocks SGK3 activation by PDK1 and mTORC2 in cells. Moreover, we show that a combination of Akt (MK-2206) and SGK (14h) inhibitors induces marked regression of tumour volume in a nude mouse xenograft model derived from BT-474 breast cancer cells. Finally, we present a kinome-wide analysis of mRNA expression dynamics induced in response to PI3K-Akt pathway inhibition. Our findings highlight the importance of the hVps34-SGK3 pathway, which is likely to represent a major mechanism that can be used by cells to counteract inhibition of the PI3K-Akt signalling network. Our results clearly emphasise the therapeutic potential of targeting both the Akt and SGK kinases for the treatment of cancer.

RESULTS

Prolonged treatment with Akt and Class I PI3K inhibitors leads to upregulation of SGK3. Treatment of breast cancer cell lines ZR-75-1 and CAMA-1 that have low levels of SGK1 (Sommer et al, 2013) with structurally diverse Akt inhibitors (MK-2206 (Hirai et al, 2010) and AZD5363 (Davies et al, 2012)) for 1 hour, inhibited phosphorylation of PRAS40 (Thr246, Akt specific substrate) as well as NDRG1 (Thr346, Akt and SGK substrate) (Fig 1A). MK-2206 is an allosteric inhibitor that suppresses Thr308 and Ser473 phosphorylation (Hirai et al, 2010), whereas AZD5363 is a catalytic inhibitor that despite ablating Akt activity in cells leads to increased phosphorylation of Thr308 and Ser473 by modulating feedback loops (Davies et al, 2012). Strikingly however, prolonged Akt inhibitor treatment over 1-10 days, led to a time-dependent recovery of NDRG1 phosphorylation, under conditions where the Akt substrate PRAS40 remained dephosphorylated (Fig 1A). Immunoblotting revealed that prolonged Akt inhibitor treatment enhanced expression of SGK3 protein over this period under conditions where SGK1 remained undetectable (Fig 1A). Quantitative mRNA analysis by RT-PCR revealed that Akt inhibitors induced 3 to 6-fold increase in SGK3 mRNA levels after 2 to 10 days, whereas SGK1 or SGK2 mRNA levels were unaltered (Fig 1B). Interestingly, knock-down of SGK3 protein expression employing 3 distinct shRNA probes, blocked prolonged Akt inhibitor treatment from enhancing NDRG1 phosphorylation in both ZR-75-1 and CAMA-1 cells (Fig 1C).

Similarly, treatment of ZR-75-1, CAMA-1, and T47D cultured in serum with structurally diverse Class I PI3K inhibitors GDC0941 (Folkes et al, 2008) and BKM120 (Bendell et al, 2012) for 1 hour also markedly suppressed NDRG1 and PRAS40 phosphorylation (Fig 2A). Analogous to what was observed with prolonged Akt inhibitor treatment (Fig 2A), prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K inhibitors induced up-regulation of SGK3 mRNA and protein levels that was accompanied by an increase in NDRG1 phosphorylation (Fig 2A and SFig1). The induction of SGK3 protein and mRNA levels was more pronounced in ZR-75-1 or CAMA-1 cells than T47D cells, but nevertheless in all 3 cell lines, prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors induced a similar significant increase in NDRG1 phosphorylation.

Prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K and Akt inhibitors leads to activation of SGK3. To study the effect that Class I PI3K (GDC0941 and BKM120) and Akt inhibitors (MK-2206 and AZD5363) had on SGK3 kinase activity, we immunoprecipitated endogenous SGK3 and assessed protein kinase activity by measuring phosphorylation of the Crosstide substrate peptide (Bago et al, 2014). In all cell lines tested (ZR-75-1, CAMA1 and T47D) short term treatment (1hour) with Akt and Class I PI3K inhibitors induced transient reduction in SGK3 activity without affecting SGK3 protein levels. The underlying mechanism behind this is not clear. In both ZR-75-1 and CAMA-1 cells, prolonged treatment (5 days) with Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors induced a robust 2 to 4-fold increase in SGK3 protein kinase activity (Fig 2B). More moderate increases SGK3 phosphorylation and activity was observed in T47D cells, consistent with the lower induction of SGK3 (Fig 2A). Immunoblot analysis of SGK3

immunoprecipitates confirmed that prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors increased SGK3 protein as well as T-loop and hydrophobic motif phosphorylation (Fig 2B).

Class III PI3K, hVps34, controls SGK3 activity. To explore the role that hVps34 might play in regulating endogenous activity of SGK3 induced by prolonged treatment with Akt inhibitors, we treated ZR-75-1 cells for 5 days with MK-2206 and then incubated cells for one hour with increasing doses of highly selective and structurally diverse hVps34 inhibitors, namely VPS34-IN1 (Bago et al, 2014) or SAR405 (Ronan et al, 2014). In ZR-75-1 cells pre-treated with Akt inhibitor (MK-2206) for 5 days, both inhibitors induced a dose dependent inhibition of NDRG1 phosphorylation with VPS34-IN1 reducing NDRG1 phosphorylation to basal levels at 1 μ M (Fig 3A) and SAR405 at 0.3 μ M (SFig 2A), consistent with the higher potency of SAR405 inhibitor towards hVps34 (Bago et al, 2014; Ronan et al, 2014). In agreement with VPS34-IN1 or SAR405 having no inhibitory activity towards Class I PI3K, neither compound suppressed Akt phosphorylation or PRAS40 phosphorylation (Fig 3B & SFig 2B). Elevated SGK3 protein kinase activity as well as T-loop and hydrophobic motif phosphorylation induced by prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors, was also suppressed by treatment with 1 μ M VPS34-IN1 (Fig 3C) or 0.3 μ M SAR405 (SFig 2C). Treatment of ZR-75-1 cells cultured in serum for 1 hour with 1 μ M VPS34-IN1 (Fig 3C) or 0.3 μ M SAR405 (SFig 2C) also reduced the basal SGK3 activity and phosphorylation detected in these cells to below control levels.

mTORC2 regulates activation of SGK3 downstream of hVPS34. The identity of the hydrophobic motif kinase that phosphorylates SGK3 downstream of hVps34 has not been established. Since mTORC2 regulates activation of SGK1 (Garcia-Martinez & Alessi, 2008), we wished to explore whether mTORC2 also mediates SGK3 hydrophobic motif phosphorylation under conditions of prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors. To achieve this, we generated ZR-75-1 cells in which the Rictor subunit of mTORC2 (Sarbasov et al, 2005), was knock-down by ~90% employing an shRNA approach (Fig 3D). Consistent with efficient knock-down of Rictor and suppression of mTORC2 activity, Akt Ser473 phosphorylation was markedly reduced in the Rictor shRNA knock-down cells whereas phosphorylation of S6 protein, which is controlled in a Rictor independent manner by mTORC1 was unaffected (Fig 3D). Knock-down of Rictor also virtually ablated kinase activity as well as the hydrophobic motif phosphorylation of SGK3 induced by prolonged treatment with Class I or Akt kinase inhibitors (Fig 3D). Treatment of ZR-75-1 cells with the mTOR catalytic inhibitor AZD8055 that inhibits both mTORC1 and mTORC2 suppressed SGK3 hydrophobic motif and T-loop phosphorylation as well as SGK3 kinase activity (Fig 3E). However, mTORC1 specific inhibitor rapamycin that does not inhibit mTORC2 at this concentration, had no effect on SGK3 phosphorylation or activity (Fig 3E).

PtdIns(3)P promotes phosphorylation and activation of SGK3 by PDK1. To investigate whether PtdIns(3)P that is produced by hVps34 could promote phosphorylation and activation of SGK3, we utilised recombinant SGK3[S486E], in which the hydrophobic motif was mutated to Glu to mimic mTORC2

phosphorylation and promote phosphorylation by PDK1 (Biondi et al, 2001). SGK3[S486E] was purified from HEK293 cells that had been treated with hVps34 (VPS34-IN1, 5 μ M) and PDK1 inhibitor (GSK2334470, 5 μ M) (Najafov et al, 2011) for 1 hour, to ensure that SGK3 was in its dephosphorylated and inactive form. SGK3[S486E] purified in this manner was incubated with lipid vesicles comprising phosphatidylcholine (PC) and phosphatidylserine (PS) containing either increasing concentrations of PtdIns(3)P or PtdIns. Kinase reactions were initiated by addition of PDK1 and MgATP. Activation of SGK3[S486E] was assessed by monitoring phosphorylation of SGK3 at Thr320 (PDK1 site) and as well as NDRG1 at Thr346 (SGK1 site). These studies revealed that activation of SGK3[S486E] beyond background levels was only observed in the presence of PS/PS vesicles containing PtdIns(3)P (Fig 4A). Even at the highest concentration of PtdIns tested (10 μ M), no significant activation of SGK3[S486E] beyond control levels was observed. We found that SGK3[S486E] isolated from HEK293 cells was contaminated with endogenous PDK1 (FIG 4-see high exposure immunoblot), which is consistent with the ability of SGK3[S486E] to bind PDK1 with high affinity (Biondi et al, 2001). Therefore, even in the absence of added recombinant PDK1, incubation of SGK3[S486E] with PC/PS vesicles containing PtdIns(3)P and MgATP lead to partial activation, under conditions where no detectable activation is observed when PtdIns(3)P is replaced with PtdIns (Fig 4B). Addition of 50 ng recombinant PDK1 led to further activation of SGK3[S486E] in the presence of PtdIns(3)P but not PtdIns (Fig 4B). Mutation of PX domain residue Arg90, required for interaction of SGK3 with PtdIns(3)P (Bago et al, 2014), prevented activation of SGK3[S486E] by PDK1 in the presence of PtdIns(3)P (Fig 4B).

14h is a potent inhibitor of SGK3. Recently, Sanofi published a new series of SGK1 inhibitors (Halland et al, 2015). As the potency of these compounds towards the SGK3 isoform was not reported, we synthesized and evaluated the selectivity of the four most potent SGK1 inhibitors (14g, 14h, 14i and 14n) described in this study (Fig 5A and SFig 3A). We confirmed that these compounds inhibited SGK1 with an IC₅₀ of 10-70 nM and found that these compounds also targeted SGK3 with an IC₅₀ of 4-80 nM (Fig 5B and SFig 3B). The 14h inhibitor was the most potent against SGK3, displaying an IC₅₀ of 4 nM, which is 2.5-fold more potent than it inhibits SGK1 (10 nM) (Fig 5B). The selectivity of these inhibitors was assessed using the Dundee panel of 140 kinases (Fig 5C for 14h and SFig 4 for 14g, 14i and 14n and STable1-4). All four SGK inhibitors displayed similar selectivity with the major off target kinases being S6K1, MLK1, MLK3, and TIE2 (Fig 5C for 14h and SFig 4 for 14g, 14i, and 14n and STable1-4). We observed that the SGK inhibitors (14g, 14h, 14i, and 14n) also suppressed S6K1 with IC₅₀ of 55 to 180 nM and MLK isoforms with IC₅₀ of 94 to 600 nM (Fig 5B and SFig 3B). Importantly, none of the SGK inhibitors tested significantly inhibited Akt1, suggesting that these compounds would be useful in discriminating between Akt and SGK mediated responses in vivo (Fig 5B and SFig 3B).

14h suppresses NDRG1 phosphorylation in cells. For cellular experiments we employed 14h, as it was the most potent SGK3 inhibitor (Fig 5B). Treatment of ZR-75-1 cells cultured in serum with increasing doses of 14h for one hour,

resulted in a dose dependent decrease in NDRG1 phosphorylation. NDRG1 phosphorylation was maximally suppressed at 1 to 3 μ M 14h, under conditions, where Akt-specific substrate PRAS40 was not dephosphorylated. Consistent with the ~20-fold lower potency of 14h towards S6K1 compared to SGK3 (Fig 5B), 1 to 3 μ M 14h failed to significantly inhibit Rictor (Thr1135, S6K1 specific site) and S6 protein (Ser240/244, S6K1 site) phosphorylation (Fig 5D). However at 10 μ M 14h, we noticed a moderate reduction in S6K1 and S6 protein phosphorylation (Fig 5D), suggesting that 14h should not be deployed at concentrations of higher than 3 μ M in cellular studies.

14h suppresses T-loop and hydrophobic motif phosphorylation of SGK3.

Allosteric Akt inhibitors such as MK-2206, in addition to suppressing kinase activity, also inhibit phosphorylation of the T-loop and hydrophobic motifs by trapping Akt in a conformation that cannot be phosphorylated by PDK1 and mTORC2 in cells (Green et al, 2008; Hirai et al, 2010). To determine whether 14h was capable of suppressing SGK3 activation in an analogous manner, we treated ZR-75-1 cells with increasing doses of 14h for one hour and analysed after immunoprecipitation SGK3 the T-loop and hydrophobic motif phosphorylation as well as kinase activity. This revealed that 14h suppressed in a dose dependent manner SGK3 hydrophobic as well as T-loop phosphorylation resulting in reduced SGK3 activity (Fig 5E). At 0.1 μ M 14h, SGK3 activity and phosphorylation was reduced by ~80% and undetectable by 1 μ M (Fig 5E). In biochemical studies 14h also suppressed the ability of PDK1 to phosphorylate SGK3[S486E] at Thr320 in the presence of PtdIns(3)P, with a near maximal inhibition observed at 0.1 μ M 14h (Fig 5F).

SGK3 activates mTORC1 independently of Akt by phosphorylating TSC2.

We next treated ZR-75-1 cells with the MK-2206 Akt inhibitor for between 1 hour and 5 days and at intervals measured SGK3 and S6K1 catalytic activity (Fig 6). After 1h treatment with MK-2206 (under conditions where SGK3 activity remains low), ~10-fold reduction of S6K1 activity was observed, which was accompanied by dephosphorylation of Rictor (Thr1135) and S6 protein (Ser240/244) as well as 4EBP1 (Ser65), another key substrate of mTORC1 (Fig 6). This result is consistent with previous work showing that a major substrate of Akt phosphorylation in cancer cells is the tuberous sclerosis complex protein TSC2 (Manning et al, 2002; Menon et al, 2014), which subsequently inhibits GTPase activating protein activity of TSC2, leading to the activation of the Rheb GTPase and hence mTORC1 (Manning et al, 2002; Menon et al, 2014). Consistent with this, 1h treatment with MK-2206 induced dephosphorylation of TSC2 (Ser939, Thr1462) at the sites phosphorylated by Akt. However, after 1-2 days of MK-2206 treatment, as SGK3 is specifically becoming upregulated, we observed a commensurate increase of S6K1 activity that correlates with increased phosphorylation of TSC2 at the Akt sites as well as Rictor, S6 protein and 4EBP1 phosphorylation, under conditions which Akt remains inactivated (Fig 6). After 4 to 5 days MK-2206 treatment, S6K1 activity as well as the phosphorylation of TSC2, Rictor, S6 protein and 4EBP1 had recovered to the similar level that was observed in non-Akt inhibitor treated cells (Fig 6).

As Akt and SGK isoforms have very similar substrate specificity (Murray et al, 2005), our data indicate that SGK3 might functionally substitute for Akt in phosphorylating TSC2 in cells lacking Akt activity. To investigate this further, we treated ZR-75-1 cells for 5 days with either Class I PI3K (GDC0941) or Akt (MK-2206) inhibitors and investigated the effect that the 14h inhibitor had on TSC2, S6K1, Rictor, S6 protein and 4EBP1 phosphorylation (Fig 7). Consistent with SGK3 mediating phosphorylation of TSC2 and leading to the activation of mTORC1 under these conditions, we observed that treatment with 3 μ M 14h for 1 hour suppressed phosphorylation of TSC2. We also observed suppression of activity and phosphorylation of S6K1 and its downstream targets, Rictor and S6 protein (Fig 7A and 7B). However, phosphorylation of 4EBP1, other mTORC1 substrate, was not markedly reduced upon SGK3 inhibition (Fig 7A). In contrast, 14h did not inhibit TSC2, S6K1, Rictor, S6 protein or 4EBP1 phosphorylation or S6K1 activity in ZR-75-1 cells cultured in serum in the absence of prolonged treatment with PI3K or Akt inhibitors (Fig 7A and 7B). As expected, under these conditions Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors suppressed TSC2, S6K1, Rictor, S6 protein or 4EBP1 protein phosphorylation as well as S6K1 activity (Fig7A) and addition of SGK inhibitor (14h) failed to ablate dephosphorylation of these substrates (SFig5). To further evaluate impact of SGK3 inhibition, we performed shRNA mediated knock-down of SGK3 expression in ZR-75-1 cells treated in the presence or absence of the Akt (MK-2206) inhibitor for 1hour or 5 days (Fig 7C). This revealed that knock-down of SGK3 markedly reduced phosphorylation of NDRG1 as well as TSC2, leading to an inhibition of mTORC1, reflected by the inhibition of S6K1, Rictor, S6 protein and 4EBP1 phosphorylation when compared to scrambled shRNA control samples (Fig 7C).

We also tested whether the addition of hVps34 inhibitor (VPS34-N1) would have the same suppressive effect on phosphorylation of TSC2 and mTORC1 substrates as SGK3 inhibition (SFig6). We found that addition of 1 μ M VPS34-IN1 for 1hour after prolonged treatment with Akt (MK-2206) or Class I PI3K (GDC0941) inhibitors had a similar effect as SGK3 inhibition (SFig6). We observed reduced phosphorylation of TSC2, S6K1, Rictor, S6 protein and 4EBP1 (SFig6). Treatment of ZR-75-1 cells for one hour with 1 μ M of VPS34-IN1 alone under conditions which SGK3 is not activated, did not have an effect on TSC2 or mTORC1 substrate phosphorylation.

To explore whether any other potential SGK3 phospho-substrates could be detected, we treated ZR-75-1 cells for 1 hour or 5 days with Akt inhibitor (MK-2206) or Class I PI3K (GDC0941) in the presence or absence of SGK3 inhibitor (14h) for one hour prior to lysis. Lysates were immunoblotted with anti-p-Akt motif substrate antibody (RxRxxpS/pT) (Zhang et al, 2002) . The results revealed that at least 6 Akt substrates detected by the p-Akt motif antibody were re-phosphorylated on Akt phosphorylation consensus motif after a 5-day exposure to Akt (MK-2206) or Class I PI3K (GDC0941) inhibitors when SGK3 is upregulated, in a manner that was blocked by the 14h SGK3 inhibitor (SFig 7). We also observed 3 Akt substrates that were not re-phosphorylated on Akt phosphorylation consensus motif after a 5-day exposure to MK-2206/GDC0941 when SGK3 is upregulated, suggesting these are Akt selective (like PRAS40). No

evidence of any SGK3 selective substrates recognised by the p-Akt motif antibody was observed (SFig 7).

Combined inhibition of both Akt and SGK is required to regress BT-474 xenograft tumours.

In order to establish the therapeutic potential of combined AKT and SGK3 inhibition in a breast cancer model, we tested cell proliferation *in vitro* and established xenografts in nude mice with BT-474 cells, which are sensitive to Akt inhibitors when cultured in vitro (Sommer et al, 2013) and in which prolonged treatment with Akt inhibitors leads to upregulation of SGK3 (Fig 8A).

Measurement of cell confluency over 5-6 days in the continued presence of the Akt inhibitors, MK2206 or AZD5363, revealed a dose dependent inhibition of cell growth compared to DMSO treated cells (Fig 8B upper and bottom panel, SFig 8A and 8B). Treatment with SGK inhibitor (14h) alone had little anti-proliferative effect, even at 3 μ M concentration (Fig 8B upper and bottom panel, SFig 8A and 8B). To determine whether a combination effect could be observed following prolonged inhibition of Akt, a long-term growth assay was undertaken. Culture in the presence of 0.3 μ M Akt inhibitors (AZD5363 or MK-2206) dramatically slowed the growth of BT474c cells but they eventually reached confluency after approx 24 and 20 days, respectively. Addition of 3 μ M SGK inhibitor (14h) induced further reduction in cell growth when it was combined with Akt inhibitor (AZD5363 or MK-2206) from the beginning of treatment or added sequentially 12 days after initial administration of Akt inhibitor (AZD5363 or MK-2206) alone (Fig 8B, upper and bottom panel).

The anti-tumour efficacy of the Akt (MK-2206) and SGK (14h) inhibitors as monotherapy and in combination was investigated in the BT-474 human breast xenograft model. At 100 mg/kg MK-2206 the in-vivo growth of BT-474 was inhibited at ~ 20% ($p < 0.01$) however no regression as monotherapy was observed. No anti-tumour effects were observed following treatment with the SGK inhibitor alone (14h, 25 mg/kg). However, concomitant administration of both agents had a significantly greater effect than that observed with either agent alone, including ~ 80% regression in all tumours ($p < 0.001$). No toxicity or weight loss relative to the vehicle control group was observed in any treatment group (Fig 8D). The concentration of inhibitors in the plasma measured 2-3 hours after the final administration was 1-3 μ M (Fig 8E), without significant differences when administered as a monotherapy or combination. To evaluate whether tumour regression in combination treatment was due to apoptosis, we performed immunohistochemical analysis of tumour samples with anti-Cleaved Caspase3 antibodies. Results showed increased number of apoptotic cells in Akt inhibitor (MK-2206) monotreatment as compared to vehicle treatment and the number of apoptotic cells was significantly higher ($p < 0.001$) in combination (MK-2206 and 14h) treatment compared to MK-2206 treatment alone (Fig 8F). Taken together, these data indicate that inhibition of both Akt and SGK is required to achieve superior anti-tumour activity in these xenografts.

To elucidate possible mechanisms for antiproliferative effect with SGK and Akt inhibitor combination treatment in *in vitro* and *in vivo* experiments, we analysed tumour samples taken at the end of the treatment. Immunohistochemical and

immunoblot analysis revealed that Akt inhibitor (MK-2206) alone ablated Akt 473 and PRAS40 phosphorylation and partially reduced NDRG1 phosphorylation and S6 protein phosphorylation (Fig 8G and 8H). SGK inhibitor (14h) when administered alone had no major effect on phosphorylation of any of these markers (Fig 8G and 8H). Combination of Akt and SGK inhibitors (MK-2206 and 14h) resulted in the ablation of NDRG1 phosphorylation and a more moderate inhibition of S6 protein phosphorylation than was observed with MK-2206 inhibitor alone (Fig 8G and 8H). Immunoblot analysis also revealed that SGK3 protein level was not markedly upregulated in tumours of mice treated with either Akt inhibitor (MK-2206) alone or in combination with SGK3 inhibitor (14h). However, the phosphorylation of NDRG (Thr246) was not ablated in Akt inhibitor treatment, indicating higher SGK3 activity, whereas combination treatment (MK-2206 and 14h) induced marked dephosphorylation of NDRG1 (Fig 8H). Additionally, phosphorylation of S6K1 (Thr389), S6 (Ser240/244) and 4EBP1 (Ser65) were detectable in samples of mice treated with Akt inhibitor (MK-2206) alone, while they were severely diminished in samples of mice receiving combination treatment (Fig 8H). These results indicate possible reactivation of the mTORC1 pathway after monotreatment with the Akt inhibitor (MK-2206). However, it is not clear whether the reactivation was mediated through SGK3 phosphorylating TSC2 at Akt sites (Thr1462), since the tumour samples obtained from monotreated (MK-2206) or combination (MK-2206 and 14h) mice showed similar level of TSC2 phosphorylation (Fig 8H). Further analysis of BT-474c cell line treated for 5 days with Akt inhibitor (MK-2206) and subsequent 1-hour treatment with SGK3 inhibitor (14h) showed the similar results as observed in ZR-75-1 cells. We observed suppression of phosphorylation of TSC2, S6K1 and its downstream target S6 protein (SFig. 9). Phosphorylation of 4EBP1, was not markedly reduced upon SGK3 inhibition (SFig 9). SGK inhibitor (14h) did not significantly suppress phosphorylation of TSC2, S6K1, S6 protein or 4EBP1 in BT-474c cells cultured in serum in the absence of prolonged treatment with Akt inhibitor (SFig9).

Exploitation of digital barcoding technology to quantify human kinome mRNA after inhibitor exposure

Given the profound effects of prolonged treatment with Akt and Class I PI3K inhibitors on SGK3 mRNA in cells, we next quantified the effects of MK-2206, AZD5363 and GDC0941 across the complete human protein kinase superfamily (Excel file 1). To accomplish this, we employed NanoString technology (Geiss et al, 2008) to digitally capture dynamics of the kinase transcriptome in response to all 3 compounds after 5 days of compound exposure (Fig 9). This data revealed complex reprogramming signatures and the appearance of compound-specific profiles. For example, exposure to MK-2206 (Fig.9A) and AZD5363 (Fig. 9B) both promoted an increase in RET and SGK110 (both from low basal levels), and a marked decrease in CDK6 mRNA levels. In contrast, exposure to the PI3K inhibitor GDC0941 (Fig. 9C) induced a more generalised kinome-wide increase in mRNA levels alongside a profound elevation in SGK3 mRNA. Indeed, out of the 536-member kinase panel, SGK3 mRNA had increased to become the 48th highest level of expression by day 5, compared to 230th in the matched DMSO control, 94th in MK-2206 and 144th in AZD5363. In contrast, we found that PKC γ mRNA

levels consistently decreased after exposure to all 3 inhibitors. These data revealed that although SGK1 and SGK2 were expressed at extremely low levels in ZR-75-1 cells (Excel file 1), very small drug-induced increases in SGK2 could be detected using a sensitive digital assay (Excel file 1). However, SGK2 increases were very low compared to SGK3 (Excel file 1), which had reached an expression level equivalent to ~0.5% of the entire kinome mRNA after GDC0941 exposure for 5 days.

The six human AKT and SGK protein kinases belong to the AGC kinase subfamily. To evaluate specific effects of Akt/PI3K inhibitors on the complete AGC family, we quantified actual and relative levels of the 60 human AGC kinases in triplicate samples after exposure to compounds for either 2 days (SFig. 10) or 5 days (SFig. 11). SGK3 was consistently the most highly up-regulated AGC kinase mRNA after exposure to all 3 compounds. Interestingly, the Akt inhibitors AZD5363 (2-3 fold up-regulation) or MK-2206 (4-5 fold up-regulation) were less potent inducers of SGK3 mRNA compared to GDC0941 (6-10-fold increase). Several other AGC kinases, including RSKL2 and MSK1, also demonstrated statistically-significant upregulation in response to several of these compounds (SFig. 10 and 11). The AGC kinome data set also provided the opportunity to assess relative absolute mRNA levels. Interestingly, AKT1 and AKT2 mRNA levels were the highest amongst all AGC kinases in ZR-75-1 cells under the conditions studied, consistent with a key endogenous pro-survival role. Consistent with our previous findings, exposure of ZR-75-1 cells to these inhibitors for either 2 or 5 days (SFig 10 and 11) had a specific and profound effect on SGK3 mRNA content. For example, SGK3 mRNA represented only the 29th most highly expressed AGC kinase in the presence of DMSO vehicle, but it had increased to become the 12th most highly abundant AGC kinase mRNA after exposure to MK-2206, and the 7th most highly abundant after exposure to GDC0941.

Discussion

Akt isoforms play crucial roles in regulating survival and proliferation of cancer cells and it would therefore be expected that loss of Akt activity resulting from prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors would not be well tolerated. Such tumours would thus be under great therapeutic pressure to upregulate additional signalling pathways to compensate for this loss of Akt activity. The ability to rapidly upregulate the SGK3 pathway represents an ingenious solution, not only because SGK3 possesses similar substrate specificity as Akt and hence the ability to phosphorylate at least a subset of overlapping substrates, but also because SGK3 can be activated independently of Class I PI3K via hVps34. Therefore, upregulation of SGK3, which we observed in our models of Akt-sensitive breast cancer cell lines, could serve as a strategy to circumvent inhibition of Class I PI3K as well as Akt isoforms and provide adaptive resistance response. Indeed, immunoblot analysis of ZR-75-1 total cell extracts employing the p-Akt motif antibody suggested that 6 out of the 9 detected Akt substrates are likely to be phosphorylated by both Akt and SGK3 (SFig 7).

By virtue of its PX domain, SGK3 is capable of binding to PtdIns(3)P produced by hVps34 on the endosomes (Bago et al, 2014) and our biochemical data suggest

that PtdIns(3)P binding can directly promote phosphorylation and activation of SGK3 by PDK1 (Fig 4). However, it has also been reported that metabolism of PtdIns(3,4,5)P₃ to PtdIns(3)P at the plasma membrane via the consecutive actions of the SHIP2 and INPP4A/B inositol phosphatases can activate SGK3, and these conclusions are partially based on the findings that Class I PI3K inhibitors suppress SGK3 activity (Fig 2B) (Chi et al, 2015; Gasser et al, 2014). SGK3 is also partially suppressed by treatment with Class I PI3K inhibitors in U2OS cells (Bago et al, 2014). In our opinion it has not yet been possible to rule out whether the effect of Class I PI3K inhibitors on SGK3 activity is a consequence of these compounds inhibiting the activation of mTORC2 that triggers SGK3 activation by phosphorylating the hydrophobic motif rather than an effect on plasma membrane PtdIns(3)P levels generated via metabolism of PtdIns(3,4,5)P₃.

Other SGK isoforms (SGK1 or SGK2) do not possess a PX domain and, like Akt, are activated downstream of Class I PI3K isoforms. It would therefore be unlikely that SGK1 and SGK2 could substitute for Akt in cells treated with Class I PI3K inhibitors, which may explain why we did not observe marked upregulation of SGK1 or SGK2 in the experiments we undertook (Fig 1 & 2). The conserved emergence of SGK3 as a key inducible resistance determinant might potentially be explained by the very high endogenous levels of AKT1 and AKT2 expression already present in these cells, and the almost complete absence of AKT3, SGK1 and SGK2 mRNAs (Excel File 1) as potential compensatory mechanisms for when Akt1 and Akt2 activity are blocked.

The SGK3 gene has been reported to be an estrogen or androgen receptor transcriptional target in ER-positive breast cancer cells (Wang et al, 2011; Xu et al, 2012) and in androgen receptor (AR) positive prostate cancer (Wang et al, 2014). It would be important to investigate the molecular mechanism by which prolonged inhibition of Akt or Class I PI3K leads to kinome-wide changes in mRNA expression levels, and in particular SGK3 mRNA and whether the upregulation of SGK3 protein and activity is limited to ER/AR cell backgrounds/tumours, or applicable to broader group of cancer cells. It would also be interesting to perform kinome-wide mRNA profiling in a wide selection of tumour or patient-derived cells before and after inhibitor exposure, so that drug resistance signatures in addition to SGK3 can be compared and contrasted as potential guides to inform targeted therapeutics.

The notion that SGK isoforms can play an important role in controlling growth and proliferation is also supported by research undertaken in model organisms such as *Caenorhabditis elegans* and budding yeast. Studies in *Caenorhabditis elegans* reveal that SGK rather than Akt is the key mediator of proliferation responses by controlling fat metabolism, reproduction and life-span (Jones et al, 2009; Soukas et al, 2009). In budding yeast, the SGK homologues termed YPK1 and YPK2 also play a vital role in regulating metabolic and other responses required for viability and proliferation (Casamayor et al, 1999; Niles et al, 2012). Previous work has shown that SGK3 is overexpressed in a variety of cancer cell lines and knock-down of SGK3 in these cells including in ZR-75-1 cells employed in this study has substantial impact on proliferation (Chi et al, 2015; Gasser et al,

2014; Virbasius et al, 2001), results we have been able to confirm (RB, data not shown).

Our data reveal that by phosphorylating TSC2 and activating mTORC1, SGK3 can mediate what has previously been referred to as “Akt-independent signalling” (Bruhn et al, 2010; Bruhn et al, 2013). It is likely that in addition to TSC2, SGK3 will phosphorylate a group of Akt substrates that could play important roles in driving metabolic, transcription, and translational responses needed for the survival and proliferation of cancer cells. Consistent with this, 6 out of the 9 Akt substrates detected immunoblot analysis of ZR-75-1 cell extracts appear to be phosphorylated by both Akt and SGK3 (SFig 7). However, it should be noted that SGK3 does not phosphorylate PRAS40 (Thr246) or Foxo1 (Ser256) (Fig 6), indicating that a subset of Akt substrates are likely not phosphorylated by SGK3. In these studies we did not detect any SGK3 selective substrates that are not phosphorylated by Akt (SFig 7). Further work would be required to understand the mechanisms determining whether Akt substrates can be phosphorylated by SGK3, but this could be controlled by consensus motif sequences and/or cellular localisation of the substrate could be an important determinant.

We also noticed that under conditions of sustained Akt inhibition in ZR-75-1 cells, in which SGK3 is activated, addition of SGK3 inhibitor (14h) (Fig 7A), whilst suppressing S6K1 phosphorylation, failed to commensurately reduce 4EBP1 phosphorylation. Similar results have been observed in other cell lines treated with the mTORC1 inhibitor rapamycin or starved from amino acids, where S6K1 phosphorylation was suppressed to a much greater extent than 4EBP1 (Choo et al, 2008; Kang et al, 2013). Other mTORC1 substrates have also been reported to be differentially affected following inhibition of mTORC1 (Kang et al, 2013). It has been suggested that this results from mTORC1 substrates being differentially sensitive to residual mTORC1 activity depending on the type and the duration of the stress conditions (Kang et al, 2013). We have also observed that the hVps34 inhibition leads to a greater dephosphorylation of 4EBP-1 than seen with SGK3 inhibition (SFig 6). This could be accounted for if the inhibition of hVps34 led to suppression of mTORC1 through mechanisms additional to SGK3. Indeed, several studies report regulation of mTORC1/S6K1 by hVps34 in response to amino acid starvation through an ill-defined mechanism (Byfield et al, 2005; Nobukuni et al, 2005). We also observed that in BT-474c cells, the inhibition of SGK3 induced a more moderate inhibition of S6K1 than in ZR-75-1 cells (Fig 6 & SFig 9), indicating that there is likely to be variation between cancer cell lines.

In this study we have further characterized 14h, a novel small-molecule cell-permeant SGK inhibitor initially reported by Sanofi (Halland et al, 2015). 14 h and the other related inhibitors we have analysed (14g, 14i and 14n) are much more specific than a previously reported and widely used SGK inhibitor GSK650394 (Sherk et al, 2008) that inhibits many kinases other than SGK1 (http://www.kinase-screen.mrc.ac.uk/screening-compounds/348807?order=field_results_inhibition&sort=asc). The only other relatively selective SGK1 inhibitor that we are aware of, EMD638683 (<http://www.kinase-screen.mrc.ac.uk/screening-compounds/617594>) is not potent displaying an in vitro IC₅₀ of only 3 μ M (Ackermann et al, 2011).

Consistent with this, extremely high doses of 100 μ M EMD638683, are required to observe marginal reduction of NDRG1 phosphorylation in breast cancer cells that express high levels of SGK1 (Eeva Sommer data not shown). Our data demonstrate that 1 to 3 μ M 14h, optimally suppresses SGK3 mediated phosphorylation of NDRG1 and TSC2 in cells (Fig 5 to 7). We also observed that 14h in addition to inhibiting SGK3 catalytic activity also suppressed phosphorylation of both the T-loop and hydrophobic motif of SGK3 in cells (Fig 5E), as well as inhibiting PDK1 from phosphorylating SGK3[S486E] in the presence of PtdIns(3)P in vitro (Fig 5F). This is analogous to Akt allosteric inhibitors such as MK-2206 that interact in an interface between the PH domain and the kinase domain, trapping Akt in a conformation that cannot be activated by PDK1 and mTORC2 (Calleja et al, 2009; Green et al, 2008; Wu et al, 2010). 14h was expected to function as a conventional Akt competitive inhibitor (Halland et al, 2015), so it is unusual for this compound to also work by preventing the activation of SGK3 by its upstream activators.

The finding that the growth of BT-474 breast cancer cells in in vitro and in a xenograft model is highly sensitive to a combination of Akt (MK-2206) and SGK (14h) inhibitors that induced inhibition of cell growth and tumour regression emphasises the therapeutic potential of a strategy of targeting both the Akt and SGK kinases for the treatment of cancer. We cannot rule out that 14h has off-target effects in a xenograft model and it would be critical to repeat these studies with a structurally diverse SGK inhibitor when it becomes available. Also, it would be useful to analyse the sensitivity of a broader number of tumours to combinations of SGK and Akt or Class I PI3K inhibitors.

In conclusion, our findings highlight the critical importance of the hVps34-SGK3 pathway and reveal that this upregulated signalling module represents a major mechanism that cells utilise to counteract inhibition of the PI3K-Akt signalling network. SGK3 is consistently the most highly up-regulated kinase mRNA amongst the 60 human AGC kinases evaluated in ZR-75-1 cells exposed to either Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors. Our findings also reveal the hVps34-SGK3 signalling pathway operates as a PI3K-Akt independent network to stimulate mTORC1 and likely other pathways that promote cancer growth. We demonstrate that sustained suppression of Class I PI3K or Akt activity over several days triggers the selective upregulation of SGK3 mRNA and protein as well as its catalytic activity in a variety of breast cancer cell lines. Our results suggest that SGK3 is specifically activated by the hVps34 lipid kinase that generates PtdIns(3)P on endosomal membranes. PtdIns(3)P then binds to the PX domain of SGK3, promoting its phosphorylation and activation by PDK1. Our findings indicate that once activated in cells that lack Akt activity, SGK3 substitutes for Akt by phosphorylating TSC2 to trigger activation of mTORC1. Our characterisation of the 14h SGK inhibitor suggests that it will become a useful research tool to probe signalling responses controlled by SGK isoforms in vivo. 14h represents a valuable addition to our growing armoury of signal transduction inhibitors to dissect functional roles of protein kinases. Finally, we establish that combined administration of Akt (MK-2206) and SGK (14h) inhibitors to mice bearing xenograft BT-474 breast cancer tumours induces a striking tumour regression compared to when the inhibitors were administered

individually. These findings highlight the therapeutic potential of a strategy targeting both the Akt and SGK kinases for the treatment of cancer.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials. Protein-G Sepharose, Glutathione-Sepharose (Amersham Biosciences); [γ - 32 P]ATP (Perkin Elmer); Triton X-100, EDTA, EGTA, sodium orthovanadate, sodium α -glycerophosphate, sodium fluoride, sodium pyrophosphate, 2-mercaptoethanol, sucrose, benzamidine, Tween-20, Tris-HCl, sodium chloride, magnesium acetate, DMSO, reduced glutathione (Sigma); phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride (PMSF) (Melford); tissue culture reagents, Novex 4-12% Bis-Tris gels, NuPAGE LDS sample buffer 4x (Invitrogen); Ampicillin (Merck); P81 phosphocellulose paper (Whatman); methanol (VWR Chemicals). liver phosphatidylcholine, brain phosphatidylserine, 1,2-dioleoyl-sn-glycero-3-(phosphoinositol-3-phosphate) and 1,2-dioleoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphoinositol (Avanti Polar Lipids). Inhibitors GDC0941 (Axon Medchem), BKM120 (ChemieTek), MK-2206 (Selleck), GSK2334470 (Tocris), AZD8055 (Selleck) were purchased from the indicated suppliers. AstraZeneca provided AZD5363. VPS34-IN1 was synthesized as described in Bago *et al.* SAR405 (CAS: 1523406-39-4) was synthesized as described in Ronan B. *et al.* Sanofi compounds 14g, 14h, 14i and 14n were synthesized as described previously (Halland et al, 2015). All recombinant proteins, DNA constructs, antibodies and inhibitors including VPS34-IN1 and SAR405 generated for the present study are described and can be requested on our reagents website (<https://mrcpppureagents.dundee.ac.uk/>).

General methods. DNA procedures were undertaken using standard protocols. DNA constructs were purified from E.coli DH5alpha using maxi prep kit (Quiagen). DNA sequence of the DNA constructs used in this study was performed by the Sequencing Service (MRC Protein Phosphorylation Unit, College of Life Sciences, University of Dundee, UK; www.dnaseq.co.uk).

Antibodies. The following antibodies were raised in sheep, by the Division of Signal Transduction Therapy (DSTT) at the University of Dundee, and affinity-purified against the indicated antigens: anti-Akt1 (S695B, third bleed; raised against residues 466–480 of human Akt1: RPHFPQFSYSASGTA), anti-NDRG1 (S276B third bleed; raised against full-length human NDRG1) (DU1557), anti-SGK3 (S037D second bleed; raised against human SGK3 PX domain comprising residues 1–130 of SGK3) (DU2034), anti-PDK1 (S682, third bleed; raised against residues 544–556 of human PDK1: RQRYQSHPDAAVQ) and anti-S6K1 (S417B, 2nd bleed; raised against residues 25-44 of human S6K1: AGVFDIDLDPEDAGSEDEL). Anti-phospho-Akt Ser473 (#9271), anti-phospho-Akt Thr308 (#4056), anti-phospho-NDRG1 Thr346 (#5482), anti-GAPDH (#2118), anti-phospho-TSC2 Thr1462(#3617), anti-phospho-TSC2 Ser939 (#3615), anti-TSC2 (#3612), anti-phospho-Rictor Thr1135 (#3806), anti-Rictor (#2140), anti-phospho-S6K1 Thr389 (#9205), anti-phospho-rpS6 Ser240/244 (#2215), anti-phospho-rpS6 Ser235/36 (#4856), anti-rpS6 (#2217), anti-phospho-4EBP1 Ser65 (#9451), anti-4EBP1 (#9452), anti-phospho-SGK3 Thr320 (#5642) and anti-phospho-Akt substrate (RxRxxS/T) (#10001) antibodies were purchased from Cell Signalling Technology. Anti-(phospho-SGK hydrophobic motif [Ser486 in SGK3]) antibody (#sc16745) was from Santa Cruz Biotechnology and total anti-SGK antibody was from Sigma (#5188). Secondary antibodies coupled to HRP (horseradish peroxidase) were obtained from

Thermo Scientific.

Cell culture and cell lysis. ZR-75-1, CAMA-1, T47D and BT-474c cell lines were sourced as described previously (Davies et al, 2012). HEK 293 cells were purchased from the American Tissue Culture Collection (ATCC). Cells were cultured in RPMI or DMEM media supplemented with 10% (v/v) foetal bovine serum, 2 mM L- glutamine, 100U/ml penicillin and 0.1 mg/ml streptomycin. Inhibitor treatments were carried out as described in figure legends. During five days inhibitor treatments the media was changed after 72-hour intervals. The cells were lysed in buffer containing 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA, 1 mM EGTA, 1 mM sodium orthovanadate, 10 mM sodium - glycerophosphate, 10 mM sodium pyrophosphate, 0.27 M sucrose, 0.1% (v/v) 2-mercaptoethanol, 1 mM benzamidine and 0.1 mM PMSF. Lysates were clarified by centrifugation at 16,000g for 10 min at 4°C. Protein concentration was calculated using Bradford assay (Thermo Scientific). Immunoblotting and immunoprecipitation were performed using standard procedures. The signal was developed using ECL Western Blotting Detection Kit (Amersham) on Amersham Hyperfilm ECL film (Amersham).

Real-time PCR for SGK1, SGK2 and SGK3. Total RNA was isolated using RNA extraction kit (Qiagen) and cDNA was prepared using iScript cDNA synthesis Kit (BIO-RAD) according to manufacturer's instructions. PCR reactions were done in 20 µL volume, containing 5 µL cDNA, 0.5 µM each primer (Invitrogen), and SSsoFast Eva Green Supermix (BIO-RAD). All PCR reactions were run as follows: 95°C for 5 min, followed by 45 cycles at 95°C for 5 s, 60°C for 30 s. Each sample was run in triplicate in three independent experiments. $2^{-(\Delta\Delta Ct)}$ method was used to calculate relative mRNA expression. C_t values were normalized against 18sRNA and relative expression was calculated using DMSO treated cDNA sample as a calibrator. Primers used in this study were as follows : SGK1 sense: 5'CTAACGTCTTTCTGTCTC'3 and antisense: 5'CATAGGAGTTATTGGCAAT'3, SGK2 sense: 5'CTTCCATCTCACTAACCA'3 and antisense: 5'CTTTGTTATTAGGGATAGTCA'3, SGK3 sense: 5'GAAGTGAATGGTTTGTCT'3 and antisense: 5'ATATTCTCTTGCCAGGAA'3 and 18S sense: 5'AATGGCTCATTAATCAGTT and antisense: 5'CTAGAATTACCACAGTTATCC'3.

SGK3 and Rictor knock-down and cell transfection. SGK3 knock-down was performed by using the MISSION shRNA (Sigma Aldrich) pLKO.1 vectors. Rictor knock-down shRNA sequence (insert sequence: ACCGGACTTGTGAAGAATCGTATCTTCTCGAGAAGATACGATTCTTCACAAGTTTTT TGAATTC) was cloned in pLKO1-puro vector (DU44740). Lentiviruses were produced in HEK293T cells, by transfecting 70% confluent 15 cm tissue culture dish with 10 µg DNA (8 µg shRNA-pLKO1-puro, 4 µg pCMVdelta R8.2 packaging vector (Adgene) and 2 µg pCMV-VSV-G envelope vector (Adgene)). DNA was mixed with 40 µL of polyethylenimine in 300 µL Optimem media (Invitrogen). The media containing viruses was collected and filtered 48 hours after transfection. Breast cancer cell lines were kept in virus containing media for 24 hours. Cells were allowed to recover in fresh media for 24 hours, before the

media was replaced with the selection media containing puromycin (2 µg/ml). The cells were kept in selection media for ten days before using for the experiments, unless stated otherwise.

Immunoprecipitation and assay of SGK3, Akt and S6K1. *In vitro* kinase activity of SGK3, Akt and S6K1 was assayed as described previously (Bago et al, 2014). Briefly, SGK3, Akt and S6K1 were immunoprecipitated from 1mg ZR-75-1 cell lysate. Immunoprecipitates were washed in sequence with lysis buffer containing high salt concentration (500 mM NaCl), lysis buffer and Buffer A (50 mM Tris pH7.5, 0.1mM EGTA). Kinase activity was assessed by measuring [γ -³²P]ATP incorporation into Crosstide substrate peptide [GRPRTSFAEGKK]. The reactions were carried in 40 µL total volume containing 0.1 mM [γ -³²P]ATP (400-1000 cpm/pmol), 10 mM magnesium acetate and 30 µM Crosstide peptide. Reactions were terminated by adding 10 µL 0.1 M EDTA and spotting 40 µL of the resulting reaction mix on P81 paper, which were immediately immersed into 50 mM orthophosphoric acid. Papers were washed at least five times in 50 mM orthophosphoric acid, rinsed in acetone and air dried. Radioactivity was quantified by Cerenkov counting. One unit of enzyme activity was defined as amount of enzyme that catalyses incorporation of 1 nmol of [γ -³²P]ATP into the substrate over one minute.

Production of recombinant SGK3. SGK3 [S486E]-GST (DU 52370) and SGK3 [R90A S486E]-GST (DU52372) in pCMV5D vector were transfected in HEK293 cells using polyethylenimine. The cells were lysed 48 hours post transfection in the lysis buffer without phosphatase inhibitors following 1-hour incubation in the presence of PDK1 inhibitor (GSK2334470, 5 µM) and hVps34 inhibitor (VPS34-IN1, 5 µM). The lysates were clarified by centrifugation and GST-tagged proteins were affinity purified using GST-Sepharose beads. The proteins were eluted with 40 mM glutathione, pH 8.0, aliquoted and stored at -80°C.

SGK3 kinase assay on phospholipid vesicles. Lipid vesicles were prepared as described in (Alessi et al, 1997b). Briefly, the mixture containing 1 mM phosphatidylcholine, 1 mM phosphatidylserine and either 0.01 to 0.1 mM phosphatidylinositol or 0.01 to 0.1 mM phosphatidylinositol(3) phosphate in chloroform was dried under vacuum and further resuspended in kinase assay buffer (10 mM Tris -HCl, pH 7.4, 150 mM NaCl, 0.1 mM EGTA) by vortexing and sonication. Multilamellar vesicles formed in this process were passed through 0.2 µm filter using lipid extruder, after which a suspension of smaller unilamellar vesicles was obtained. Solutions were stored at 4°C at concentrations 10x higher than those used in the kinase assay and used within 3 days. The kinase assay was carried out in two stages; in the first stage 50 ng of SGK3 [S486E]-GST or SGK3 [R90A, S486E]-GST was incubated with lipid vesicles, 10 mM Mg-acetate and 0.1 mM ATP. The reaction was started by adding 50 ng of recombinant GST-PDK1 (32U/mg) (DU954) to permit activation of SGK3-GST. After 30 min at 30°C, the reaction was stopped by adding PDK1 inhibitor (GSK2334470, 1µM). In the second stage, the reaction mixture was topped up with 0.1 mM ATP and reaction started by adding 2 µg of recombinant GST-NDRG1 (DU1557) to permit phosphorylation by activated SGK3-GST. The assay was carried out for 30 min at 30°C. The reaction was stopped by adding 4x LDS sample buffer.

Determination cell growth *in vitro*. For growth assays BT474c cells were seeded in 12-well plates at a density of 1×10^5 cells/well and left to adhere overnight. Cells were then treated with MK-2206, AZD5363 and 14h inhibitors. and imaged every 4 hours on the Incucyte ZOOM (Essen Bioscience) for up to 4 weeks to give a measure of cell confluency. Media was refreshed every 4-5 days. Inhibitor treatments were carried out as described in figure legends

Animal studies and IHC. Experiments involving mice were in accordance with Institutional Guidelines of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (Protocol number 12-10-019). Animals were housed in air-filtered laminar flow cabinets with a 12-hour light cycle and food and water *ad libitum*. BT-474 VH2 (Baselga et al, 1998) were resuspended in 1:1 Complete media/Matrigel (Corning) and injected subcutaneously into the flanks of six-week-old female athymic *Foxn1^{nu}* nude mice (Harlan Laboratories). Animals' drinking water was supplemented with $1 \mu\text{M}$ $17\beta\text{-E2}$ (Sigma). When tumours reached a volume of $\sim 150\text{mm}^3$, mice were randomized, treated, and tumours were measured twice a week. Tumour volume was determined using the following formula: $(\text{length} \times \text{width}^2) \div 2$. Tumour growth was represented as the fold change mean \pm SEM. Treatments were as follows: MK-2206 ($100 \text{ mg} \times \text{kg}^{-1}$ in 30% Captisol (Sigma), 5 times/week, p.o.) and 14h ($25 \text{ mg} \times \text{kg}^{-1}$ in 40% of 3:1 Glycofurol/Kolliphor® RH 40 mixture (Sigma) in 0.9% saline, 5 times/week, p.o.). Tumours were harvested at the end of the experiment four hours after the last dosage, fixed in 4% formaldehyde in PBS, and paraffin-embedded. IHC was performed on a Ventana Discovery XT processor platform using standard protocols and the following antibodies from Cell Signalling Technology: pAkt(S473) (#4060), 1:70; pPRAS40(T246) (#2997), 1:50; pS6 (S240/4) (#5364), 1:500; pNDRG1 (T346) (#5482), 1:200; Cleaved Caspase-3 (#9664), 1:50. Primary staining was followed by 60 minutes incubation with biotinylated goat anti-rabbit IgG (Vector labs) 1:200. Blocker D, Streptavidin- HRP and DAB detection kit (Ventana Medical Systems) were used according to the manufacturer instructions.

NanoString analysis. ZR-75-1 cells were collected, washed in PBS and snap-frozen. Cell pellets were resuspended at a concentration of $\sim 6,500$ cells/ μl in RLT buffer (Qiagen). The equivalent of $\sim 10,000$ cells ($\sim 1.5 \mu\text{l}$) were employed for direct kinase mRNA quantification, without the need for further mRNA purification or amplification. mRNAs were hybridised to NanoString human kinome barcode probes and control code sets, and kinase mRNA levels quantified using the nCounter colour barcoding system after count normalisation with internal housekeeping genes and 8 negative controls. For total copy numbers, triplicate normalised count values were averaged, and to calculate fold-induction, means were divided by triplicate mean values from matched DMSO controls. p-values were calculated using unpaired T-test (GraphPad Prism software) by employing treated and control count data for each kinase mRNA

Protein kinase profiling. Protein kinase profiling against Dundee panel of 140 protein kinases was undertaken at the International Centre for Protein Kinase Profiling. The result for each kinase was presented as a mean kinase activity of the reaction taken in triplicate relative to a control sample treated with DMSO.

Assay conditions and abbreviations are available at <http://www.kinase-screen.mrc.ac.uk>.

Statistical analysis. All experiments presented in this paper were performed at least twice and similar results were obtained. Error bars indicate standard deviation.

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Figure legends

FIGURE 1. Prolonged treatment with Akt inhibitors leads to upregulation of SGK3. ZR-75-1 and CAMA-1 cell lines were treated with 1 μ M MK-2206 or 1 μ M AZD5363, for indicated time periods. Cell lysates were subjected to (A) immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies or (B) mRNA isolation followed by cDNA preparation. Real-time PCR was performed on cDNA samples using specific primers against SGK1, SGK2 and SGK3 isoforms. Relative mRNA levels were calculated using $2^{-(\Delta\Delta Ct)}$ method using DMSO treated samples as calibrator. (C) ZR-75-1 and CAMA-1 cells were treated with 1 μ M MK-2206 or 1 μ M AZD5363 for a total of 10 days. After 7 day treatment, SGK3 was knocked down by using three different shRNA probes, named SGK3 A, B and C and compared to a control shRNA probes, named sh scramble. Cells were maintained in the presence or absence of the indicated inhibitor during this period. At day 10 cells were lysed and subjected to immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies.

FIGURE 2. Prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K inhibitors leads to upregulation of SGK3. (A) The indicated cell lines were treated with either 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M AZD5363, 1 μ M GDC0941 or 1 μ M BKM120 for the indicated times. Cell lysates were subjected to immunoblot analysis with indicated antibodies. (B) The indicated cells were treated as in (A) and SGK3 was immunoprecipitated from the lysates using an anti-SGK3 antibody. The immunoprecipitates (IP) were subjected to *in vitro* kinase assay by measuring phosphorylation of the Crosstide substrate peptide in the presence of 0.1 mM 32 P γ ATP in a 30 min 30°C reaction (upper panel) followed by immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies (lower panel). Kinase reactions are presented as means \pm SD for triplicate reaction.

FIGURE 3. SGK3 activity induced by inhibition of PI3k/Akt is regulated by hVps34 and mTORC2. (A) ZR-75-1 cells were treated with 1 μ M MK-2206 for 5 days and then one hour (1h) prior to cell lysis, cells were further treated with increasing doses of VPS34-IN1. Cell lysates were subjected to immunoblot analysis with indicated antibodies. (B) ZR-75-1 cells cultured in serum in the absence of Akt inhibitor were treated for one hour (1h) with the indicated concentrations of VPS34-IN1. The cell lysates were analysed by immunoblot using the indicated antibodies. (C) ZR-75-1 cells were treated for 5 days with either 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M AZD5363, 1 μ M GDC0941 or 1 μ M BKM120. One hour prior to lysis the cells were incubated in the presence or absence of 1 μ M VPS34-IN1. SGK3 was immunoprecipitated from lysates and subjected to *in vitro* kinase assay by measuring phosphorylation of the Crosstide substrate peptide in the presence of 0.1 mM 32 P γ ATP in a 30 min 30°C reaction (upper panel). Kinase reactions are presented as means \pm SD for triplicate reaction. Immunoprecipitates (IP) and lysates were analysed by immunoblot with the indicated antibodies. One-hour (1h) treatment with the PDK1 inhibitor GSK2334470 (Najafav et al, 2011) (1 μ M) was used as a control for SGK3 inhibition. (D) ZR-75-1 cells were stably transfected with either a control shRNA vector (scrambled) or a shRNA vector that targets Rictor expression (shRictor). The cells were grown in the presence or absence of 1 μ M MK-2206 or 1 μ M

GDC0941 for 5 days. SGK3 was immunoprecipitated from the lysates and subjected to *in vitro* kinase assay as in (C). Immunoprecipitates (IP) and lysates (lower panel) were also subjected to immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies. (D) ZR-75-1 cells were cultured in the absence or presence of 1 μ M MK-2206 for 5 days. Cells were then treated in the absence or presence of 0.1 μ M AZD8055 or 0.1 μ M Rapamycin for 1 hour (1h). SGK3 was immunoprecipitated and subjected to *in vitro* kinase assay as in (C). The immunoprecipitates (IP) and lysates were analysed with indicated antibodies.

FIGURE 4. PtdIns(3)P binding to PX domain of SGK3 promotes phosphorylation and activation by PDK1. SGK3 [S486E]-GST and SGK3 [R90A S486]-GST were purified from HEK293 cells transiently overexpressing these enzymes. One hour prior to lysis, cells were treated with 5 μ M VPS34-IN1 and 5 μ M GSK2334470 to ensure that the SGK3 was in its inactive dephosphorylated form. (A) SGK3[S486E]-GST was incubated with lipid vesicles comprising phosphatidylcholine (PC) and phosphatidylserine (PS) containing the indicated concentrations of PtdIns or PtdIns(3)P in the presence or absence of added recombinant PDK1 (50 ng) and kinase reactions were initiated by addition of MgATP. After 30 min at 30°C, PDK1 was inhibited by addition of the 1 μ M GSK2334470 PDK1 inhibitor and reaction mixture was supplemented with 2 μ g GST-NDRG1 SGK3 substrate. After another 30 min at 30°C the reaction was terminated by addition of SDS Sample Buffer. The reaction mixtures were subjected to immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies. (B) As in (A) except that non PtdIns(3)P-binding mutant SGK3[R90A, S486E]-GST was utilised.

FIGURE 5. 14h selectively suppresses both the activity and activation of SGK3 by PDK1 and mTORC2. (A) Chemical structure of the Sanofi-14h SGK inhibitor. (B) IC₅₀ values of Sanofi-14h SGK inhibitor on indicated recombinant kinases. (C) Protein kinase profiling undertaken against the Dundee panel of 140 protein kinases in the presence of 1 μ M Sanofi-14h at the International Centre for protein Kinase Profiling. The result for each kinase is presented as a mean kinase activity of the reaction taken in triplicate relative to a control reaction where the inhibitors were omitted. Abbreviations and assay conditions are described at <http://www.kinase-screen.mrc.ac.uk>. (D) ZR-75-1 cells were treated for one hour (1h) with the indicated concentrations of 14h. The cell lysates were analysed by immunoblot analysis using the indicated antibodies. (E) ZR-75-1 cells were treated for one hour (1h) with the indicated concentrations of 14h. SGK3 was immunoprecipitated from cell lysates and subjected to *in vitro* kinase assay by measuring phosphorylation of the Crosstide substrate peptide in the presence of 0.1 mM ³²P γ ATP in a 30 min 30°C reaction (upper panel). Kinase reactions are presented as means \pm SD for triplicate reaction. Immunoprecipitates (IP) were also analysed by immunoblot with the indicated antibodies. (F) The effect of the indicated concentration of 14h on the ability of SGK3[S486E]-GST to be activated by PDK1 in the presence of PtdIns(3)P was assessed as described in the legend to Figure 4.

FIGURE 6. SGK3 counteracts inhibition of the PI3K-Akt pathway by phosphorylating TSC2 and stimulating S6K1. ZR-75-1 cells were treated with 1 μ M MK-2206 for indicated times. SGK3 (upper panel) and S6K1 (middle panel) were immunoprecipitated and subjected to *in vitro* kinase assay by measuring phosphorylation of the Crosstide substrate peptide in the presence of 0.1 mM 32 P γ ATP in a 30 min 30°C reaction. Kinase reactions are presented as means \pm SD for triplicate reaction. Immunoprecipitates (IP) were also analysed by immunoblot with the indicated antibodies. The cell lysates were also analysed by immunoblot using the indicated antibodies (lower panel).

FIGURE 7. SGK3 counteracts inhibition of the PI3K-Akt pathway by phosphorylating TSC2 and stimulating mTORC1. ZR-75-1 cells were treated for 1 hour (1h) or 5 days with 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M GDC0941 or 3 μ M 14h inhibitors, alone or in combination, as indicated. (A) The cell lysates were analysed by immunoblot using the indicated antibodies. (B) SGK3 (upper panel), Akt1 (middle panel) and S6K1 (lower panel) were immunoprecipitated from the same cell lysates and subjected to *in vitro* kinase assay by measuring phosphorylation of the Crosstide substrate peptide for kinases in the presence of 0.1 mM 32 P γ ATP in a 30 min, 30°C reaction. Kinase reactions are presented as means \pm SD for triplicate reaction. Immunoprecipitates (IP) were also analysed by immunoblot with the indicated antibodies. (C) SGK3 was knocked down in ZR-75-1 cells by using shRNA probe B and compared to a control shRNA probe, named sh scramble. After infection, the cells were kept for 2 days in puromycin selection media and then seeded for the experiment. The cells were treated with 1 μ M MK-2206 for 1 hour (1h) or 5 days. The cell lysates were subjected to immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies.

FIGURE 8. Dual treatment with Akt and SGK inhibitors reduces tumour growth in BT-474 xenograft model. (A) BT-474 cells were treated for the indicated times with the 0.3 μ M MK-2206. The cell lysates were analysed by immunoblot using the indicated antibodies. (B) BT474c cells were treated with inhibitors as indicated either as monotherapy or in combination and cell confluency measured on the Incucyte ZOOM every 4 hours for up to 4 weeks. (C) BT-474 cells were injected subcutaneously into athymic *Foxn1^{nu}* nude mice. Mice were treated with either vehicle (8 mice) or MK-2206 (100mg/kg) (10 mice) or 14h (25mg/kg) (6 mice) or both, MK-2206 and 14h (10 mice) for 24 days. The tumour volume was measured twice a week. Tumour growth was represented as the fold change mean \pm SEM. (D) All mice were weighed at the end of the treatments. Results are presented as mean \pm SD. (E) Plasma concentrations of MK-2206 and 14h were analysed in samples obtained 2-3 hours after the administration of the last dose on the 24th day of treatment. Results are presented as a mean \pm SD from three different samples. (F) Tumours were harvested at the end of the experiment, four hours after the last dosage and subjected to immunohistochemical analysis using cleaved Caspase 3 antibody (clCasp3). Apoptotic cells were counted in 25 fields per each condition (left panel) and quantified as clCasp3 positive cells/field (right panel). Representative images are shown. Bar 100 μ m (G) Tumours were harvested at the end of the

experiment, four hours after the last dosage and subjected to immunohistochemical analysis with the indicated antibodies. Representative images are shown. Bar 100 μm . (H) Tumours were obtained the same way as (G) and subjected to immunoblot analysis with indicated antibodies. Six different tumours were analysed from each treatment group.

FIGURE 9. Prolonged exposure to Akt or Class I PI3K inhibitors induce transcriptional changes in human kinome

ZR-75-1 cells were treated for 5 days with 1 μM MK-2206 (A), 1 μM AZD5363 (B), 1 μM GDC0941 (C) or DMSO. Human mRNAs were hybridised to NanoString human kinome and control code sets, then subjected to quantification using NanoString software. Results are presented as mRNA change of each kinase relative to mRNA isolated from control sample treated with DMSO. To permit data compaction, and simple kinome-wide comparisons, the fold changes are log₂ transformed. The kinase mRNAs exhibiting prominent changes are annotated, with SGK3 highlighted in red. Similar profiles were obtained in one independent experiment.

Supplementary Figure legends

Supplementary Figure 1. Prolonged treatment with Class I PI3K and Akt inhibitors leads to upregulation of SGK3 mRNA. ZR-75-1 (left panel), CAMA-1 (middle panel) and T47D (right panel) cells were treated for 5 days with either 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M AZD5363, 1 μ M GDC0941 or 1 μ M BKM120. mRNA isolation was followed by cDNA preparation. Real-time PCR was performed on cDNA samples using specific primers against SGK3 isoform. Relative mRNA levels were calculated using $2^{(-\Delta\Delta Ct)}$ method using DMSO treated samples as calibrator.

Supplementary Figure 2. Further evidence that SGK3 activity induced by inhibition of PI3k/Akt is regulated by hVps34. (A) ZR-75-1 cells were treated with 1 μ M MK-2206 for 5 days and then one hour (1h) prior to cell lysis cells were further treated with increasing doses of SAR405. (B) ZR-75-1 cells cultured in serum in the absence of Akt inhibitor were treated for one hour (1h) with the indicated concentrations of SAR405. The cell lysates were analyzed by immunoblot using the indicated antibodies. (C) ZR-75-1 cells were treated for 5 days with 1 μ M MK-2206 or 1 μ M GDC0941. One hour prior to lysis the cells were incubated in the presence or absence of 0.3 μ M SAR405. SGK3 was immunoprecipitated from lysates and subjected to *in vitro* kinase assay by measuring phosphorylation of the Crosstide substrate peptide in the presence of 0.1 mM 32P γ ATP in a 30 min 30 °C reaction (upper panel). Kinase reactions are presented as means \pm SD for triplicate reaction. Immunoprecipitates (IP) and lysates were also analysed by immunoblot with the indicated antibodies.

Supplementary Figure 3. Structure and IC50 data for 14g, 14i and 14n SGK inhibitors. (A) Chemical structures of Sanofi-14g, -14i and -14n compounds. (B) IC50 values of inhibitors on indicated recombinant kinases.

Supplementary Figure 4. Protein kinase profiling of 14g, 14i and 14n SGK inhibitors. Profiling of Sanofi 14g (A), 14i (B) and 14n (C) compounds was undertaken against the Dundee panel of 140 protein kinases in the presence of 1 μ M compound at the International Centre for protein Kinase Profiling. The result for each kinase is presented as a mean kinase activity of the reaction taken in triplicate relative to a control reaction where the inhibitors were omitted. Abbreviations and assay conditions are described at <http://www.kinase-screen.mrc.ac.uk>.

Supplementary Figure 5. SGK3 inhibition does not ablate residual mTORC1 activity during short term inhibitor treatment. ZR-75-1 cells were treated for 1 hour (1h) with 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M GDC0941 or 3 μ M 14h inhibitors, alone or in combination, as indicated. The cell lysates were analysed by immunoblot using the indicated antibodies.

Supplementary Figure 6. hVps34 inhibition exerts the similar effect as SGK3 inhibition in regulation of TSC2-mTORC1 axis. ZR-75-1 cells were treated for 1 hour (1h) or 5 days with 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M GDC0941 or 1 μ M

VPS34-IN1 inhibitors, alone or in combination, as indicated. The cell lysates were analysed by immunoblot using the indicated antibodies.

Supplementary Figure 7. SGK3 phosphorylate a subset of proteins with RxRxxS/T motif upon sustained inhibition with Class I PI3K or Akt inhibitors. ZR-75-1 cells were treated for 1 hour (1h) or 5 days with 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M GDC0941 or 3 μ M 14h inhibitors, alone or in combination, as indicated. The cell lysates were analysed by immunoblot using the antibody against phosphorylated Akt phosphorylation consensus motif (RxRxxpS/pT). Red asterisk indicates potential dual Akt and SGK3 substrates whose phosphorylation is induced following 5 day MK-2206 or GDC0941 treatment and suppressed by a subsequent 1-hour treatment with 14h. Blue circles indicates potential Akt selective substrates whose phosphorylation is inhibited by MK-2206 or GDC0941 treatment and but do not become re-phosphorylated following 5 day incubation with these inhibitors under conditions where SGK3 is upregulated.

Supplementary Figure 8. Akt inhibition induces dose dependent inhibition of cell growth in BT-474c cells *in vitro*. BT-474c cells were treated with DMSO, 3 μ M 14h, and indicated doses of MK-2206 (A) or AZD5363 (B) inhibitors. Cell confluency was measured on the Incucyte ZOOM every 4 hours for up to 6 days.

Supplementary Figure 9. SGK3 counteracts inhibition of the PI3K-Akt pathway by phosphorylating TSC2 and stimulating mTORC1 in BT-474c cells. BT-474c cells were treated for 1 hour (1h) or 5 days with 1 μ M MK-2206 or 3 μ M 14h, as indicated. SGK3 (upper panel) and S6K1 (middle panel) were immunoprecipitated and subjected to *in vitro* kinase assay by measuring phosphorylation of the Crosstide substrate peptide in the presence of 0.1 mM 32 P γ ATP in a 30 min 30°C reaction. Kinase reactions are presented as means \pm SD for triplicate reaction. Immunoprecipitates (IP) were also analysed by immunoblot with the indicated antibodies. The cell lysates were subjected to immunoblot analysis using the indicated antibodies (bottom panel).

Supplementary Figure 10. Total human AGC kinase mRNA expression profiles in cells exposed to compounds for 2 days.

ZR-75-1 cells were grown in the presence or absence of DMSO, 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M AZD5363 or 1 μ M GDC0941 for 2 days, and total human AGC kinase mRNA levels were quantified using NanoString software. Data are presented as log₁₀ values of triplicate data \pm SD. The rank order position of SGK3 mRNA in each condition, and its relative expression towards all human AGC kinases, is annotated in red (left panel). All AGC kinase mRNAs exhibiting a ≥ 2 -fold change in expression level in the appropriate compound relative to DMSO control are quantified (right panel). *= $p < 0.05$, **= $p < 0.01$, ***= $p < 0.001$ (right panel).

Supplementary Figure 11. Total human AGC kinase mRNA expression profiles in cells exposed to compounds for 5 days.

ZR-75-1 cells were grown in the presence or absence of DMSO, 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M AZD5363 or 1 μ M GDC0941 for 5 days, and total human AGC kinase mRNA levels were quantified using NanoString software. Data are presented as log₁₀

values of triplicate data \pm SD. The rank order position of SGK3 mRNA in each condition, and its relative expression towards all human AGC kinases, is annotated in red (left panel). All AGC kinase mRNAs exhibiting a ≥ 2 -fold change in expression level in the appropriate compound relative to DMSO control are quantified (right panel). *= $p < 0.05$, **= $p < 0.01$ (right panel).

Excel File 1. Normalised whole kinome mRNA counts from ZR-75-1 cells treated with DMSO, 1 μ M MK-2206, 1 μ M AZD5363 or 1 μ M GDC0941 for 5 days.

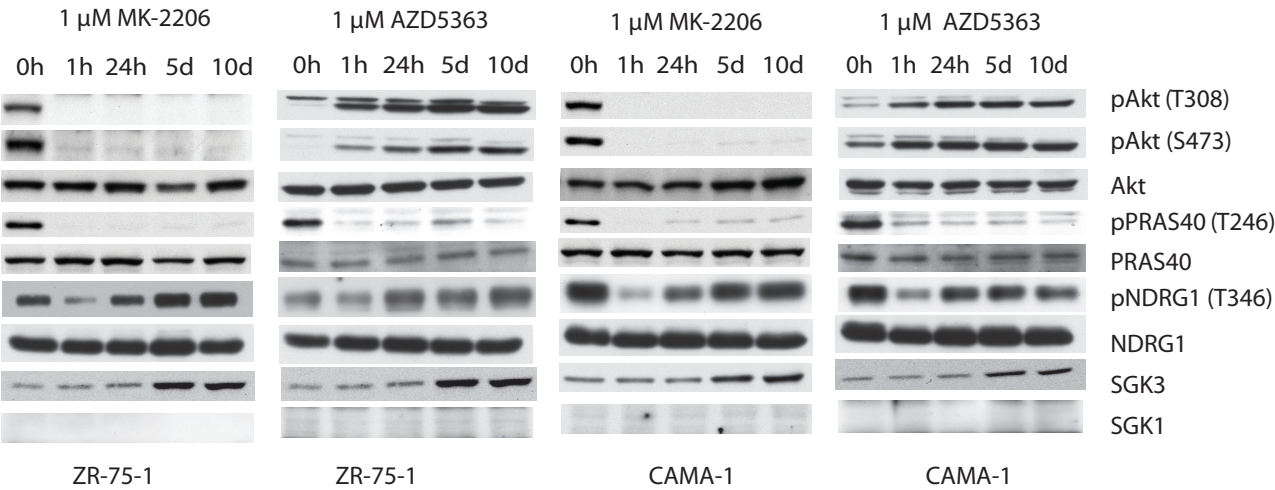
Supplementary Tables 1-4.

Results are presented as the percentage of kinase activity in DMSO control reactions. Protein kinases were assayed *in vitro* in the presence of 1 μ M Sanofi-14g (Table 1), -14h (Table 2), -14i (Table 3) and -14n (Table 4) compounds, as described on the International Centre for Kinase Profiling website (<http://www.kinase-screen.mrc.ac.uk/>), and the results are means \pm S.D. for triplicate reactions. Abbreviations are as follows: ABL, Abelson tyrosine-protein kinase 1; AMPK, AMP-activated protein kinase; ASK, apoptosis signal-regulating kinase; BRK, breast tumour kinase; BRSK, brain-specific kinase; BTK, Bruton's tyrosine kinase; CaMK, calmodulin-dependent kinase; CaMKK, CaMK kinase; CDK, cyclin-dependent kinase; CHK, checkpoint kinase; CK, casein kinase; CLK, CDC-like kinase; CSK, C-terminal Src kinase; DAPK, death-associated protein kinase; DDR, discoidin domain receptor; DYRK, dual-specificity tyrosine-phosphorylated and regulated kinase; EF2K, elongation-factor-2 kinase; EIF2AK, eukaryotic translation initiation factor 2- α kinase; EPH, ephrin; ERK, extracellular signal-regulated kinase; FGF-R, fibroblast growth factor receptor; GCK, germinal centre kinase; GSK, glycogen synthase kinase; HER, human epidermal growth factor receptor; HIPK, homeodomain-interacting protein kinase; IGF1R, IGF1 receptor; IKK, inhibitory κ B kinase; IR, insulin receptor; IRAK, interleukin-1 receptor-associated kinase; IRR, insulin-related receptor; JAK, Janus kinase; JNK, c-Jun N-terminal kinase; Lck, lymphocyte cell-specific protein tyrosine kinase; LKB1, liver kinase B1; MAPK, mitogen-activated protein kinase; MAPKAP-K, MAPK-activated protein kinase; MARK, microtubule-affinity regulating kinase; MEKK, MAP kinase kinase kinase; MELK, maternal embryonic leucine zipper kinase; MINK, misshapen/NIK-related kinase; MKK, MAPK kinase; MLK, mixed lineage kinase; MNK, MAPK-integrating protein kinase; MPSK, myristoylated and palmitoylated serine/threonine-protein kinase; MSK, mitogen- and stress-activated protein kinase; MST, mammalian homologue Ste20-like kinase; NEK, NIMA (never in mitosis in *Aspergillus nidulans*)-related kinase; NUA, novel (NUA) family SnF1-like kinase; OSR, oxidative stress-responsive kinase; PAK, p21-activated protein kinase; PDGFRA, platelet-derived growth factor receptor- α ; PDK, phosphoinositide-dependent kinase; PHK, phosphorylase kinase; PIM, provirus integration site for Moloney murine leukaemia virus; PINK (insect homologue), PTEN-induced kinase; PKA, cAMP-dependent protein kinase; PKB, protein kinase B; PKC, protein kinase C; PKD, protein kinase D; PLK, polo-like kinase; PRAK, p38-regulated activated kinase; PRK, protein kinase C-related kinase; RIPK, receptor-interacting protein kinase; ROCK, Rho-dependent protein kinase; RSK, ribosomal S6 kinase; S6K1, p70 ribosomal S6 kinase; SGK, serum- and glucocorticoid-induced protein kinase; SIK, salt-induced kinase; smMLCK, smooth muscle myosin light-chain kinase;

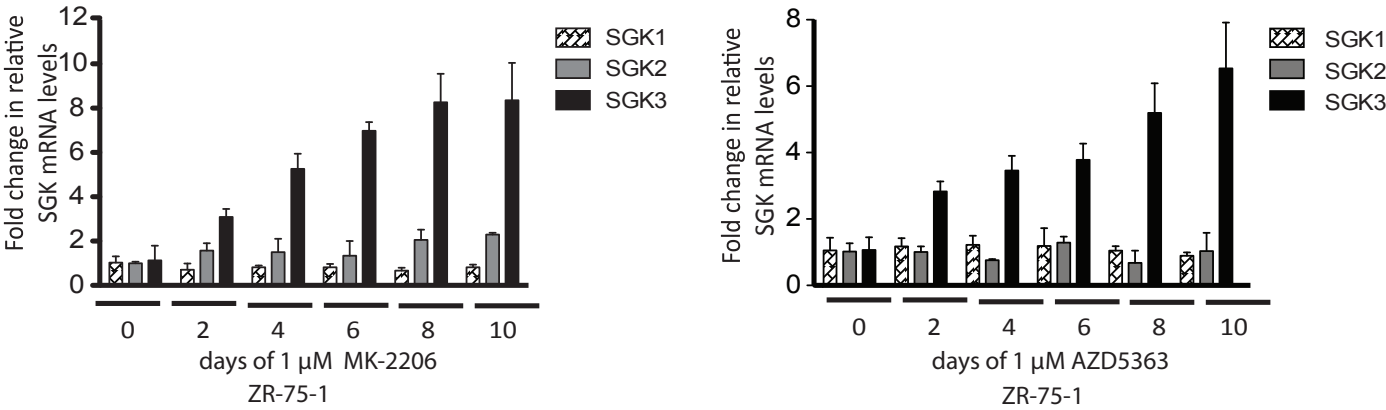
SRPK, serine/arginine protein kinase; STK, serine/threonine kinase; SYK, spleen tyrosine kinase; TAK, TGF β -activated kinase; TAO, thousand and one amino acid; TBK1, TANK-binding kinase 1; TESK, testis-specific protein kinase; TGFBR, TGF β receptor; TIE, tyrosine-protein kinase receptor; TLK, tousled-like kinase; TrkA, tropomyocin receptor kinase; TSSK, testis-specific serine/threonine-protein kinase; TTBK, tau-tubulin kinase; ULK, Unc-51-like kinase; VEGFR, vascular endothelial growth factor receptor; WNK, with no lysine; YES1, Yamaguchi sarcoma viral oncogene homologue 1; ZAP, ζ -chain-associated protein.

FIGURE 1.

A



B



C

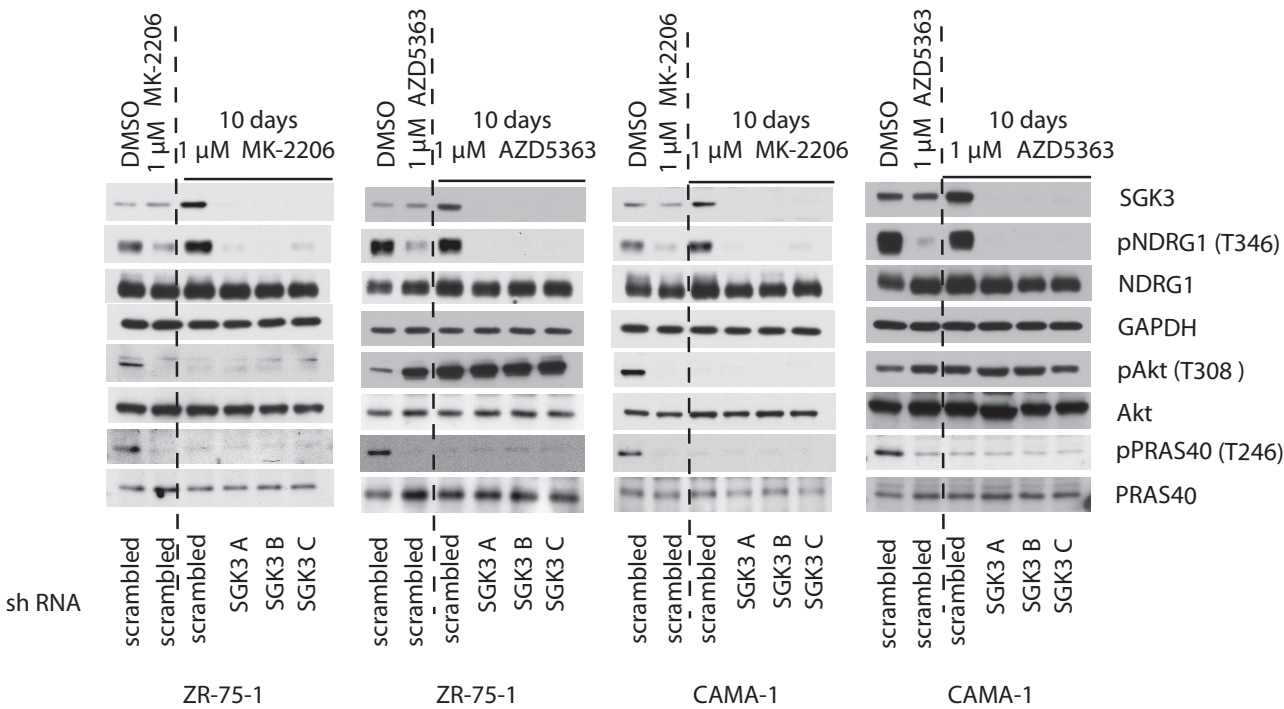


FIGURE 2

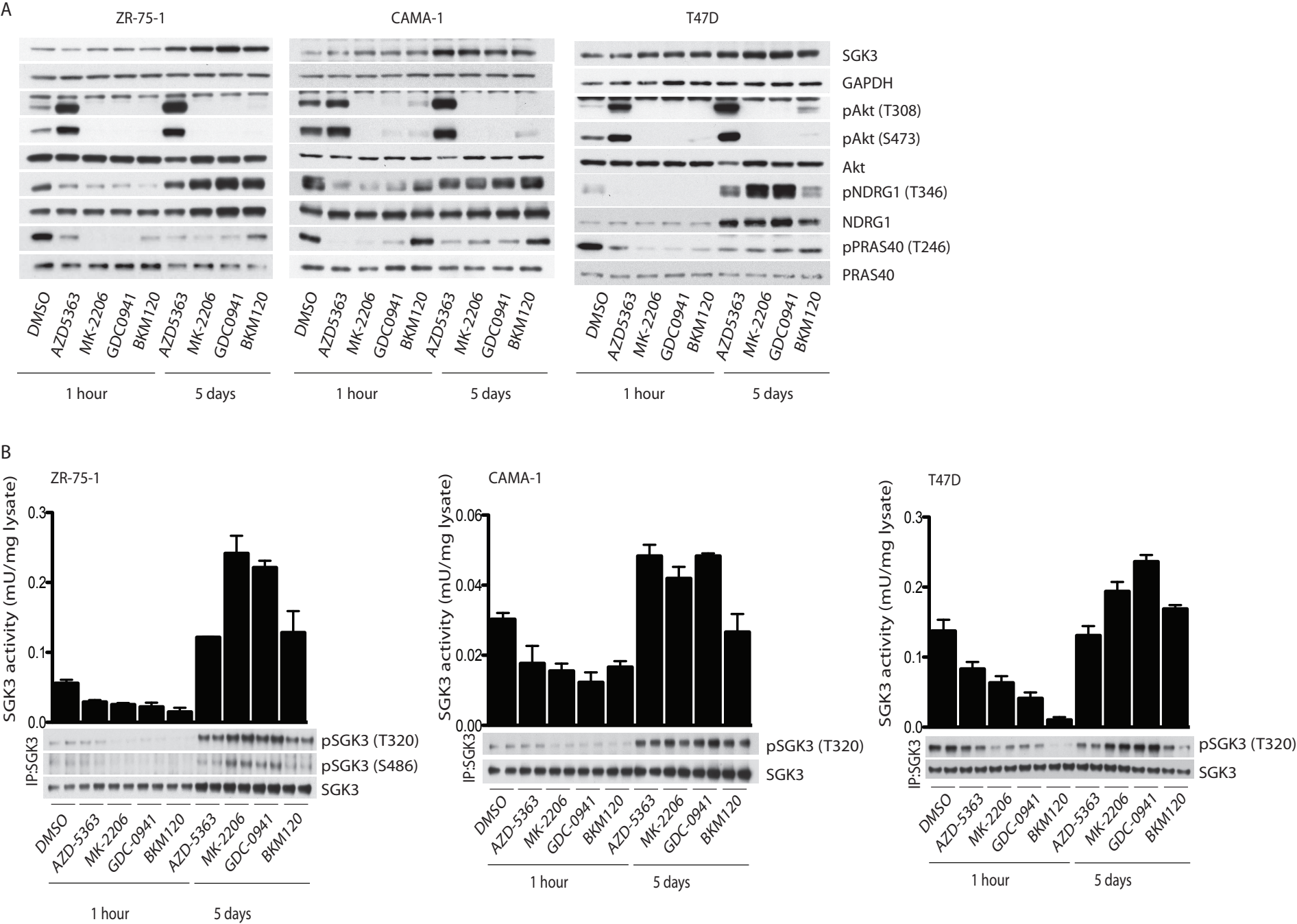
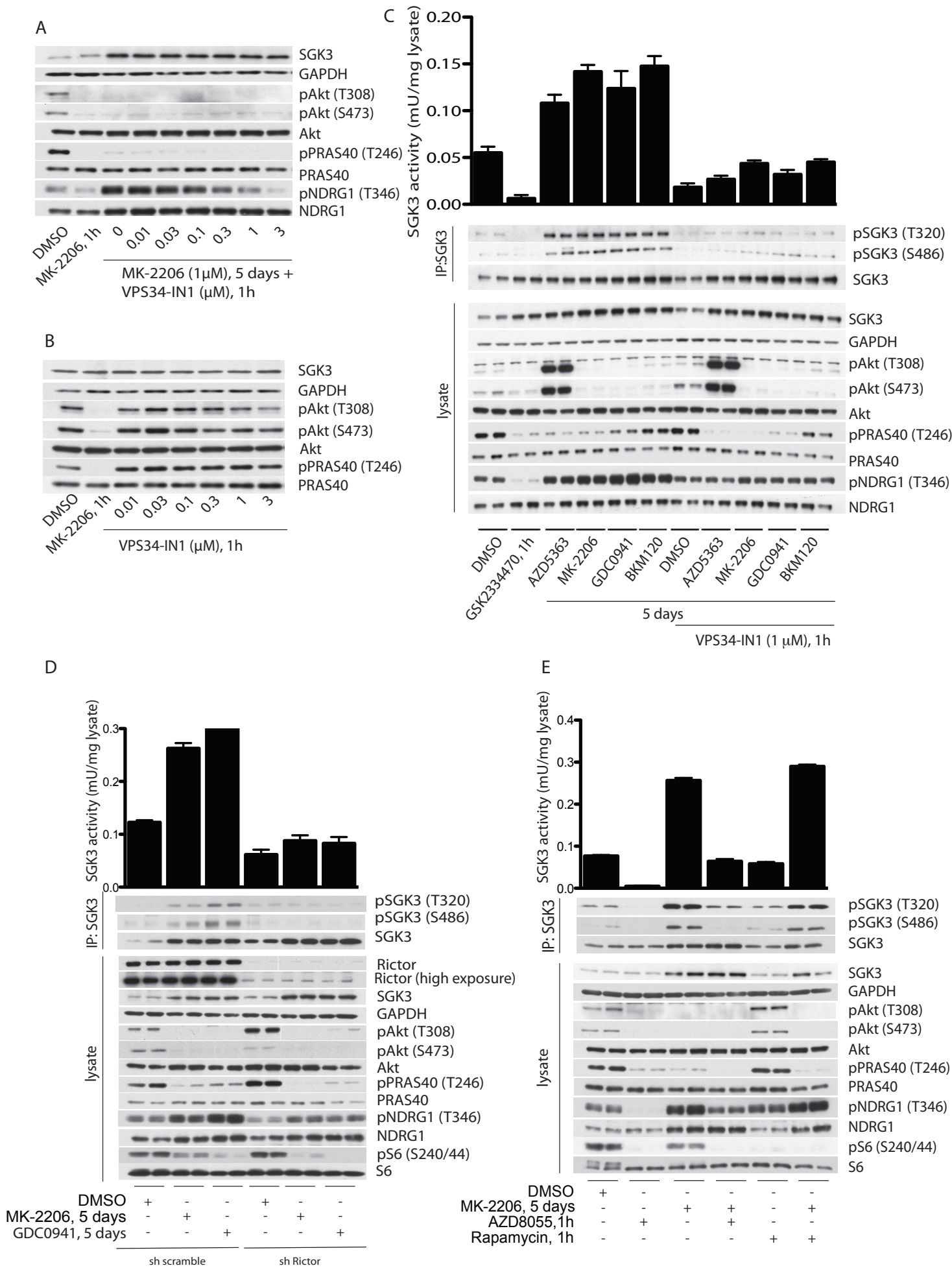


FIGURE 3



A

Western blot analysis showing protein levels of pSGK3 (T320), pNDRG1 (T346), PDK1, SGK3, and NDRG1 in various cell lines. The blots are arranged vertically, with each row corresponding to a specific protein. The lanes are labeled at the top: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100. The blots show varying levels of protein expression across the different cell lines, with pSGK3 (T320) and pNDRG1 (T346) showing strong bands in most lanes, PDK1 showing a strong band in lane 1 and weaker bands in other lanes, SGK3 showing a strong band in lane 1 and weaker bands in other lanes, and NDRG1 showing a strong band in lane 1 and weaker bands in other lanes.

B

SGK3 S486E R90A-GST (50 ng)

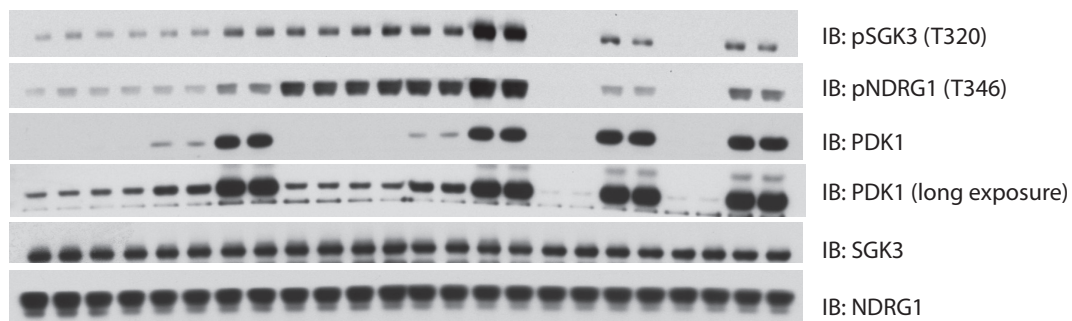
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FIGURE 5

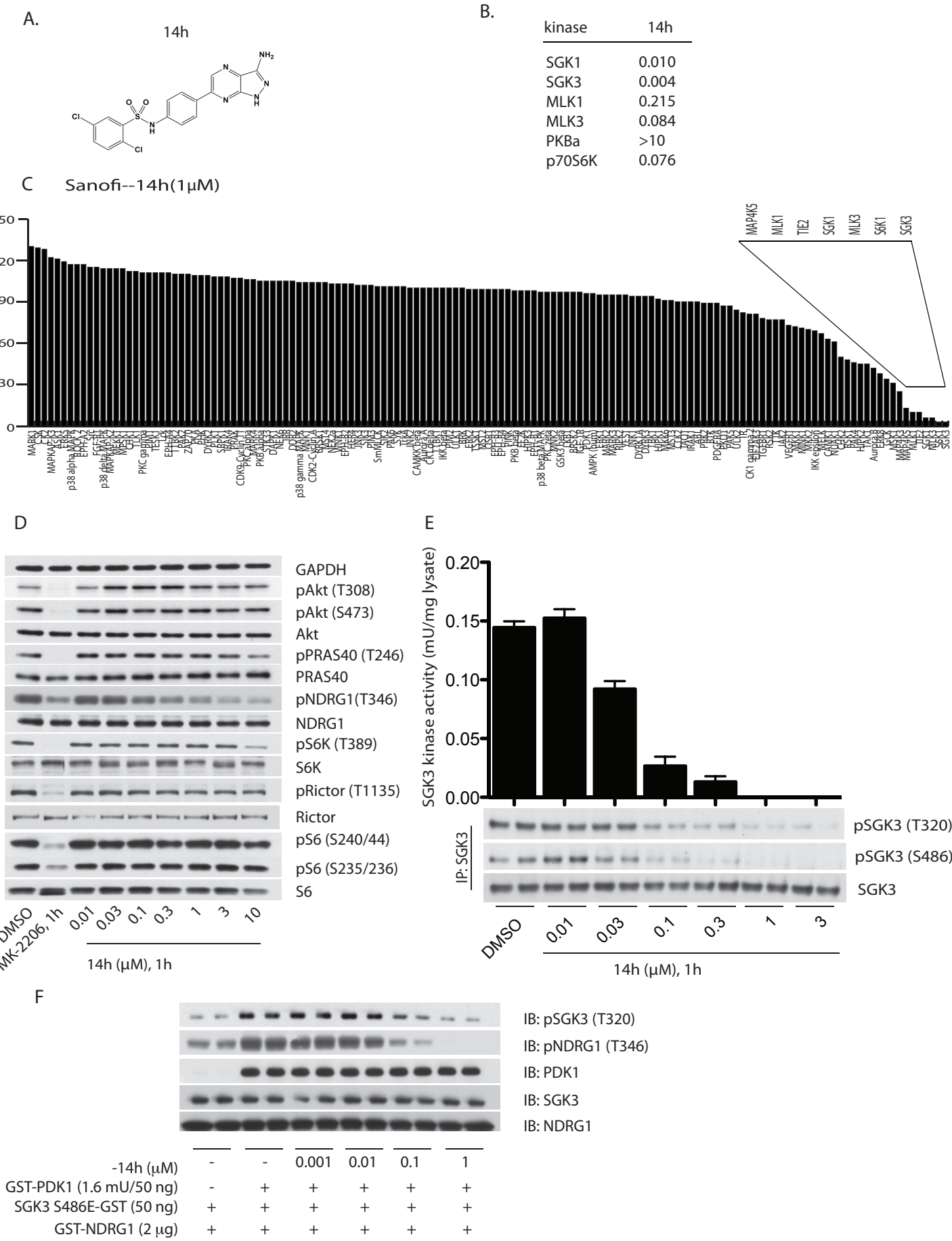


FIGURE 6

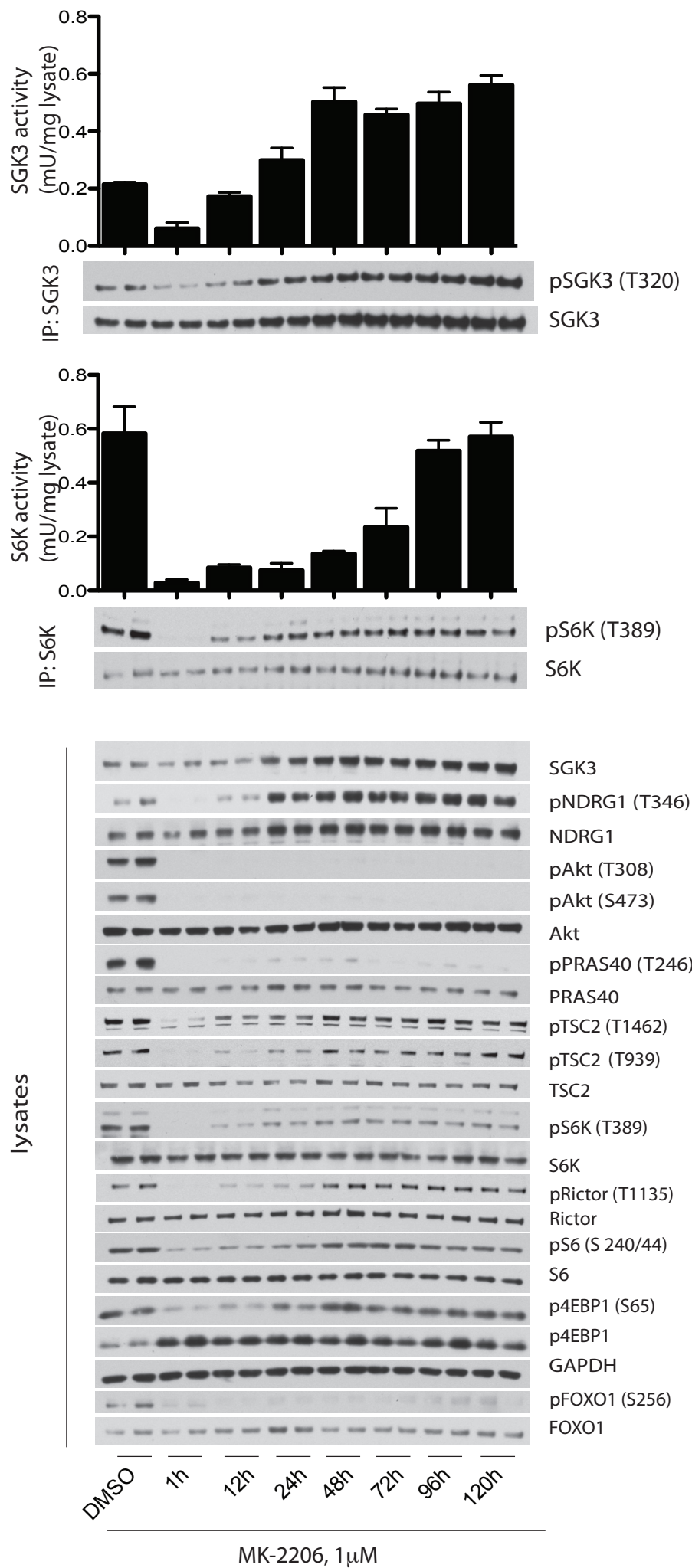
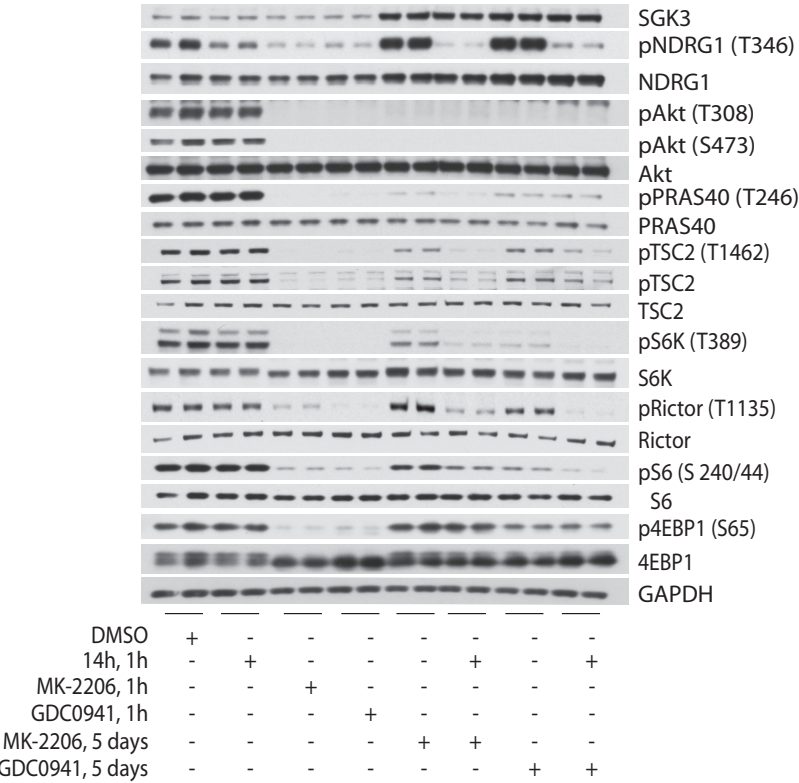
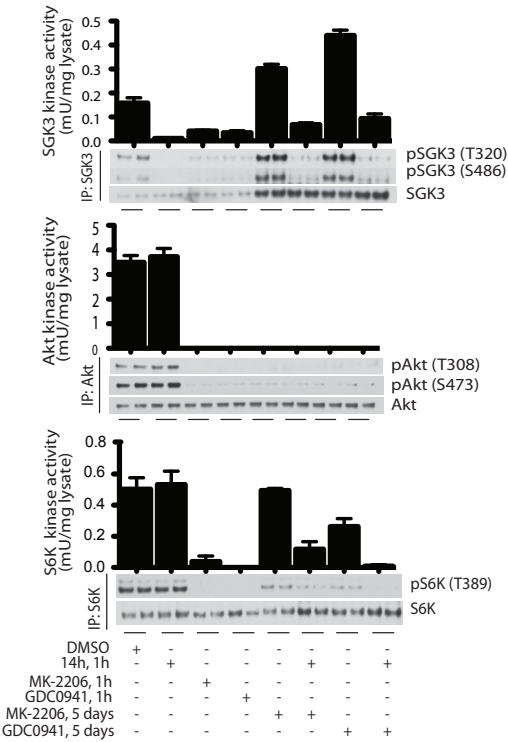


FIGURE 7

A



B



C

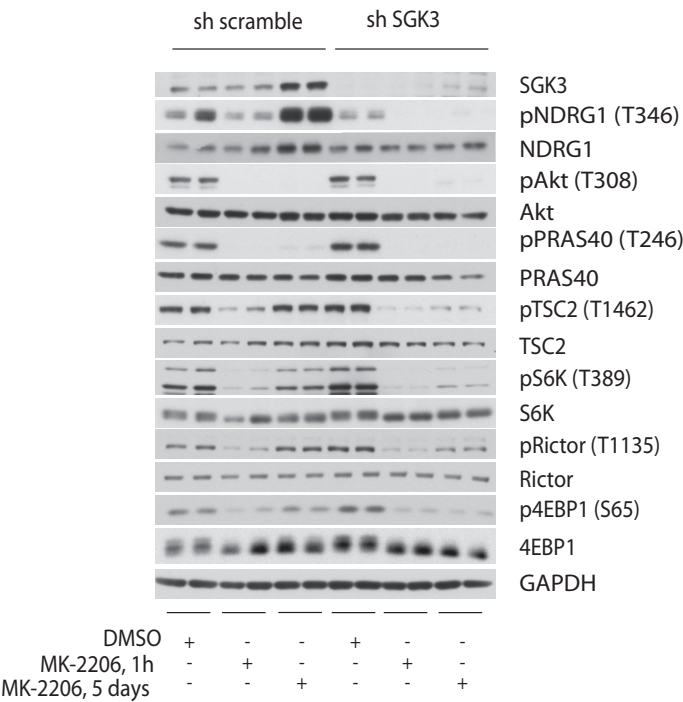


FIGURE 8

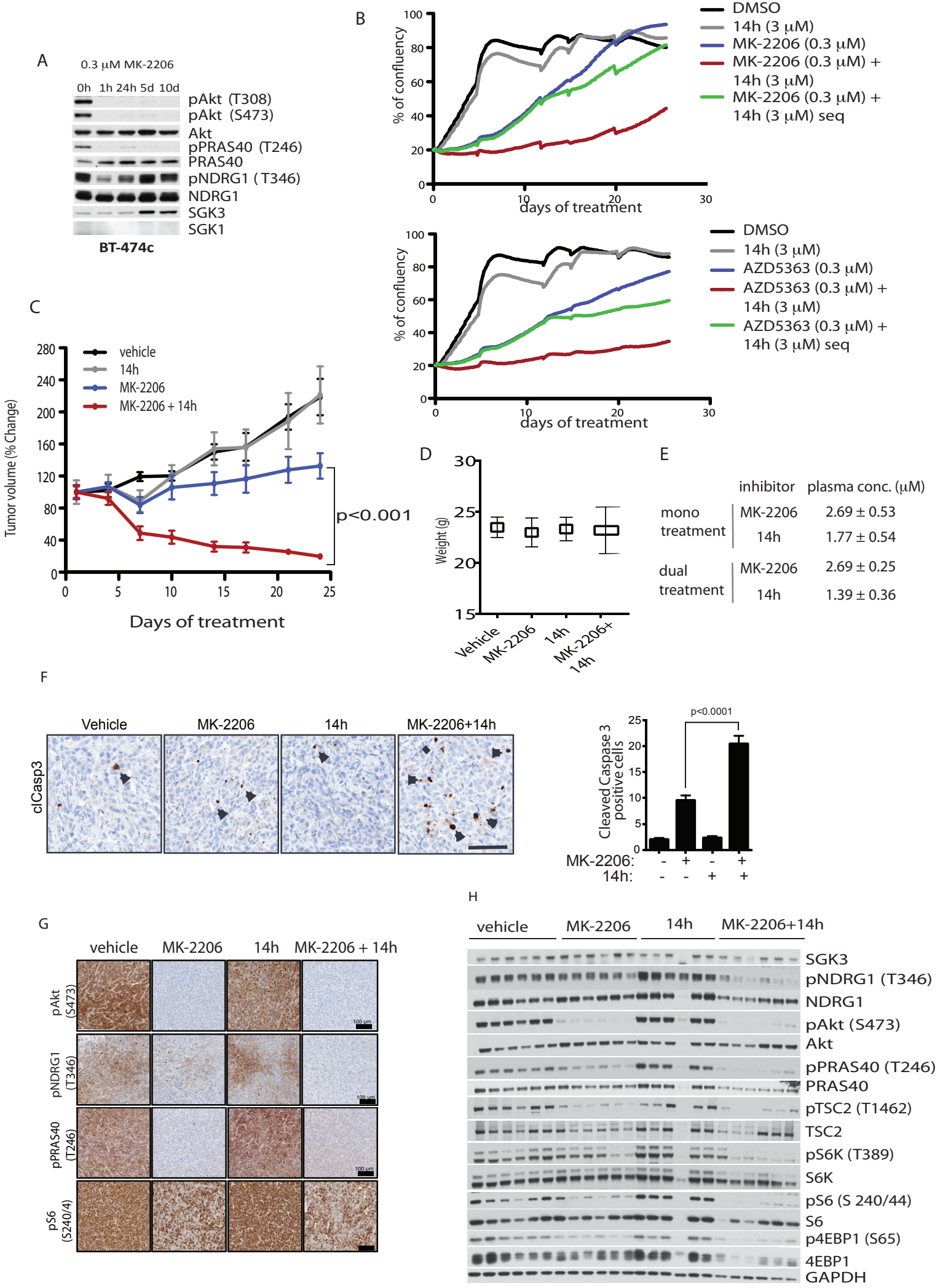
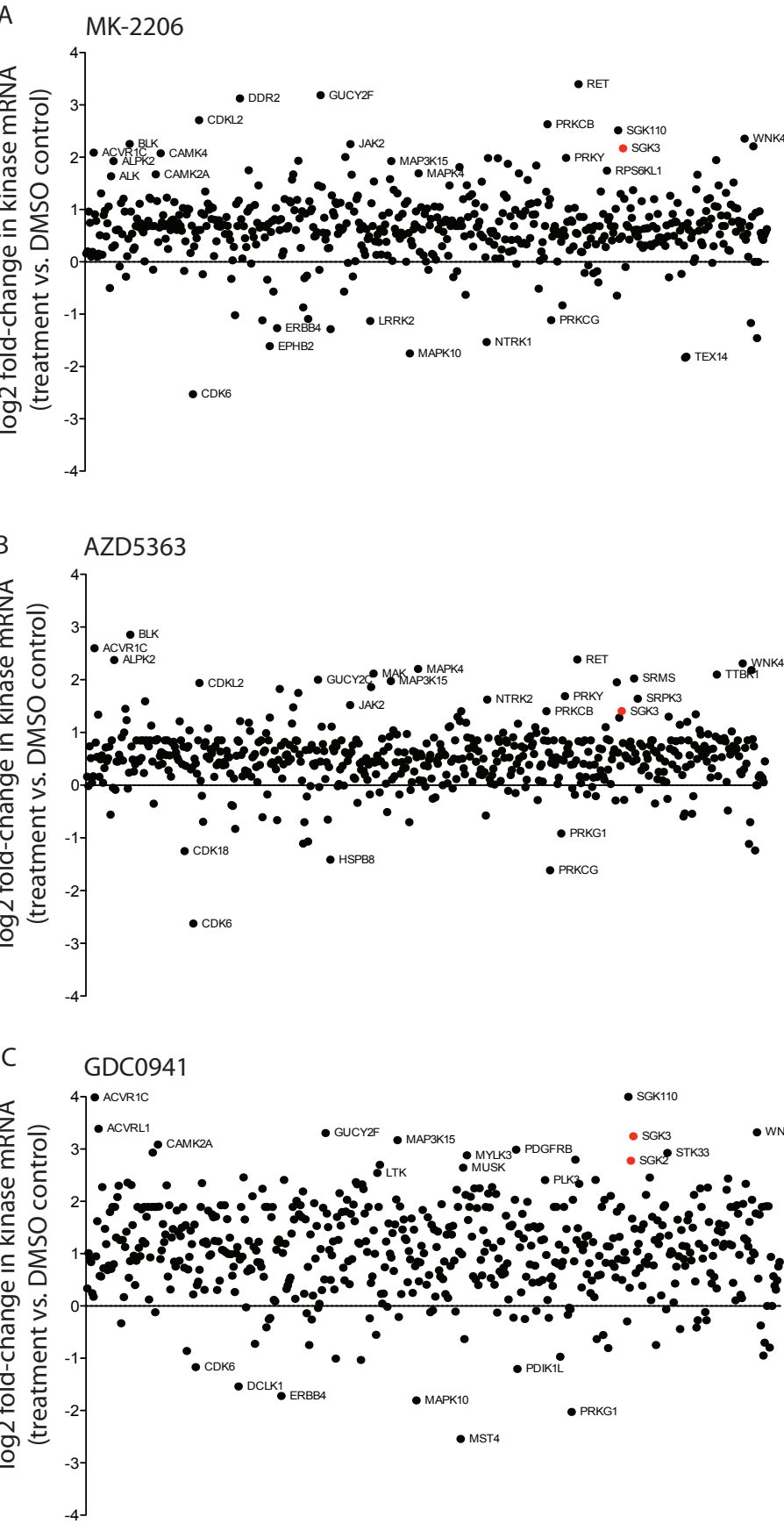
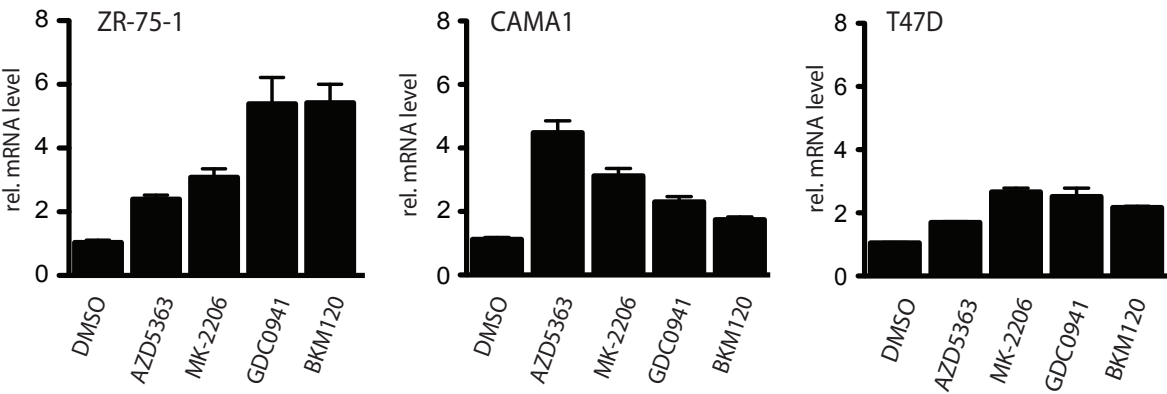


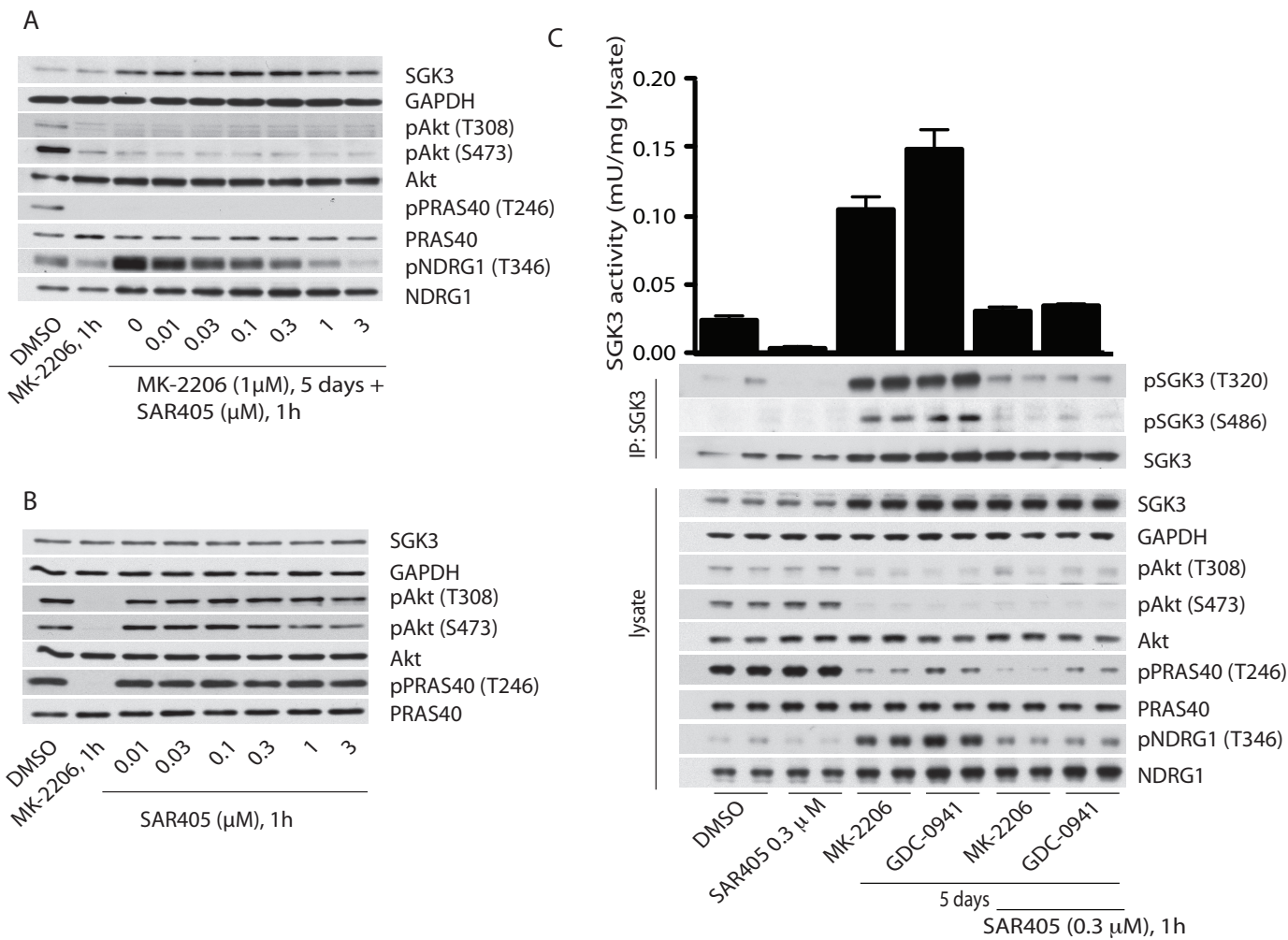
FIGURE 9



Supplementary FIGURE 1.

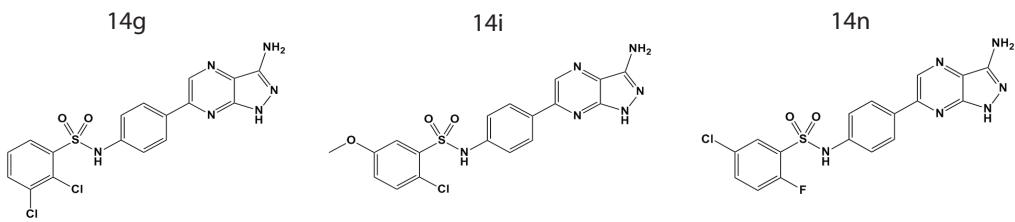


Supplementary Fig. 2



Supplementary Figure 3.

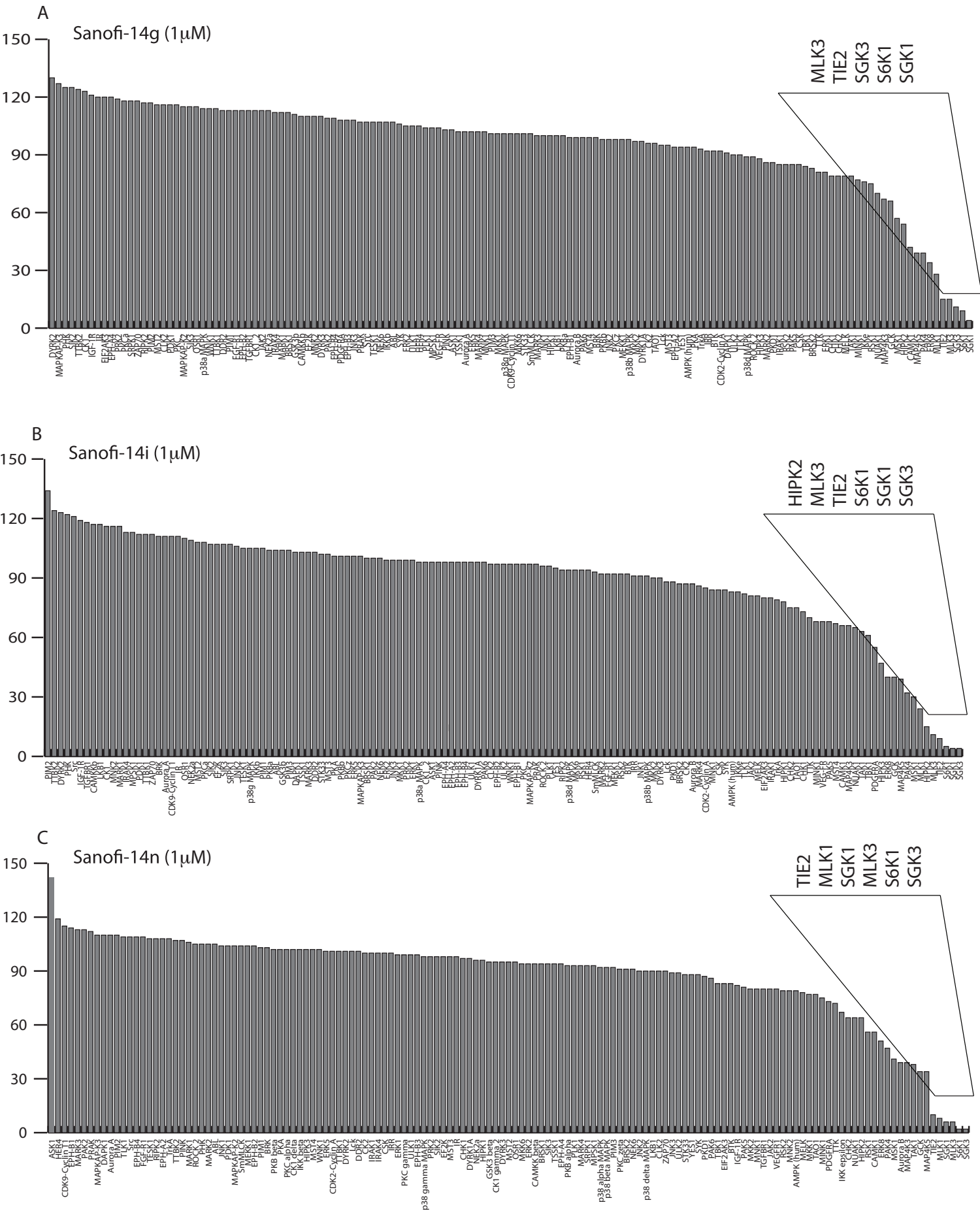
A



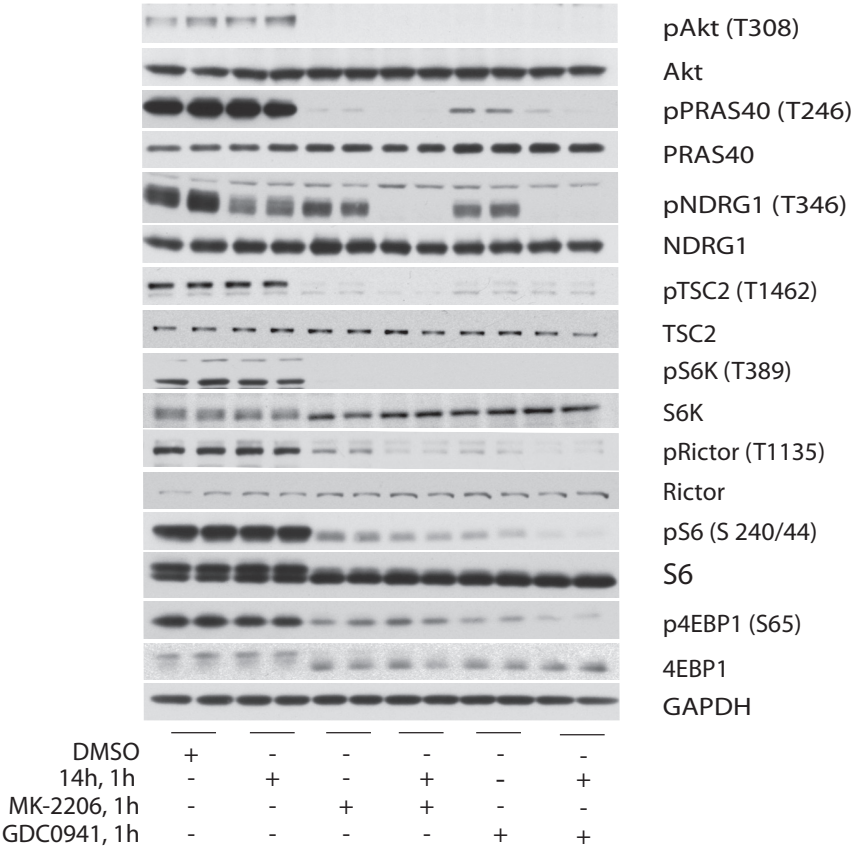
B.

kinase	14g	14i	14n
SGK1	0.05	0.07	0.013
SGK3	0.08	0.03	0.013
MLK1	0.38	0.6	0.169
MLK3	0.14	0.27	0.094
PKBa	>10	>10	>10
S6K1	0.06	0.18	0.076

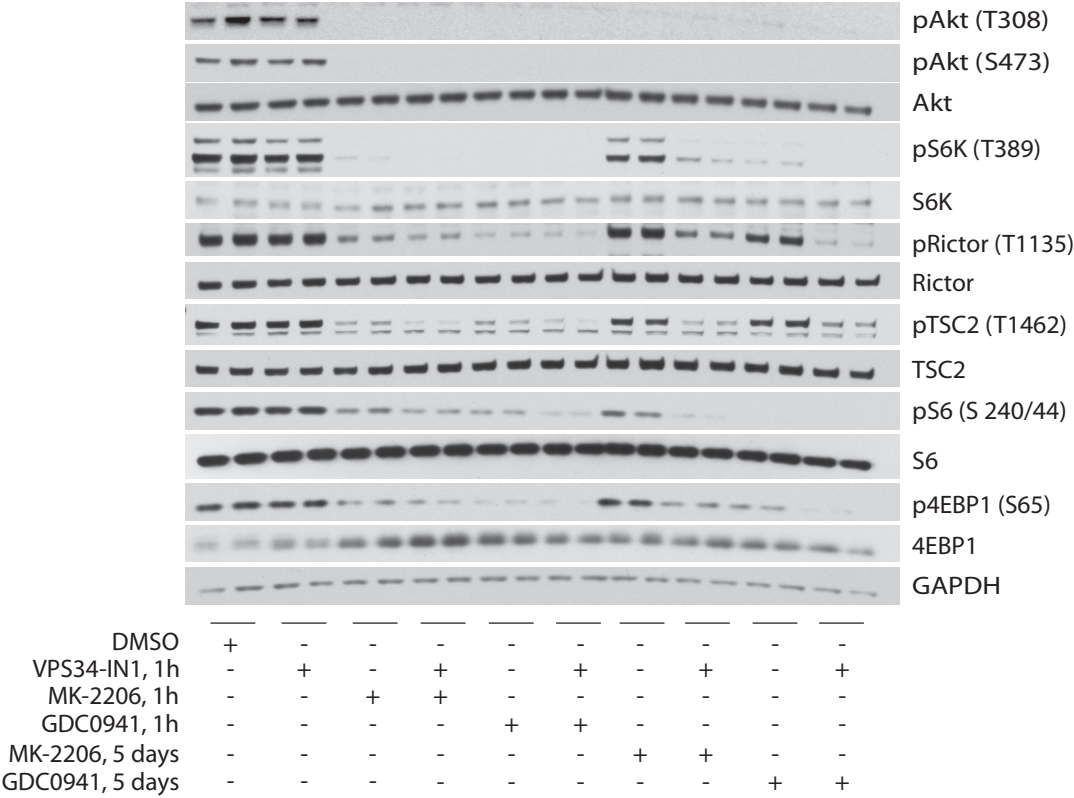
Supplementary Figure 4.



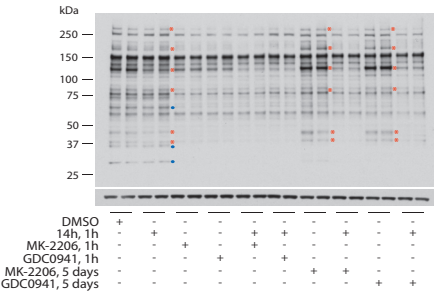
Supplementary Figure 5



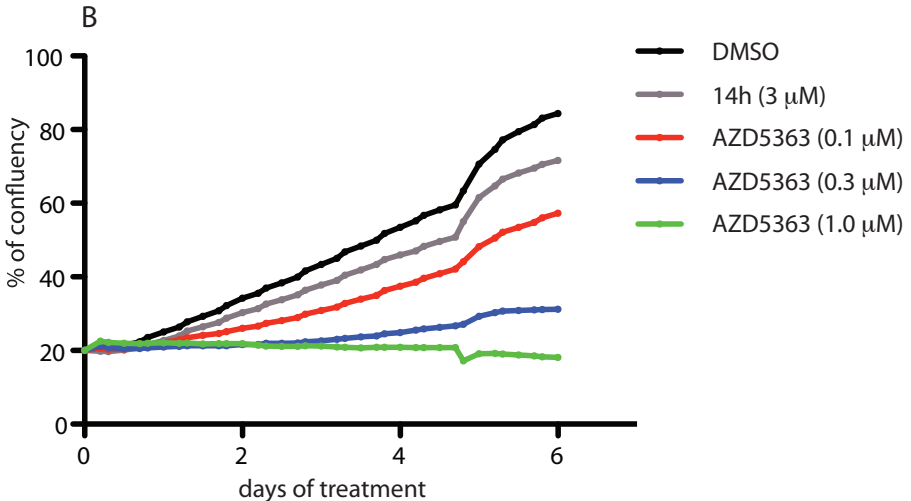
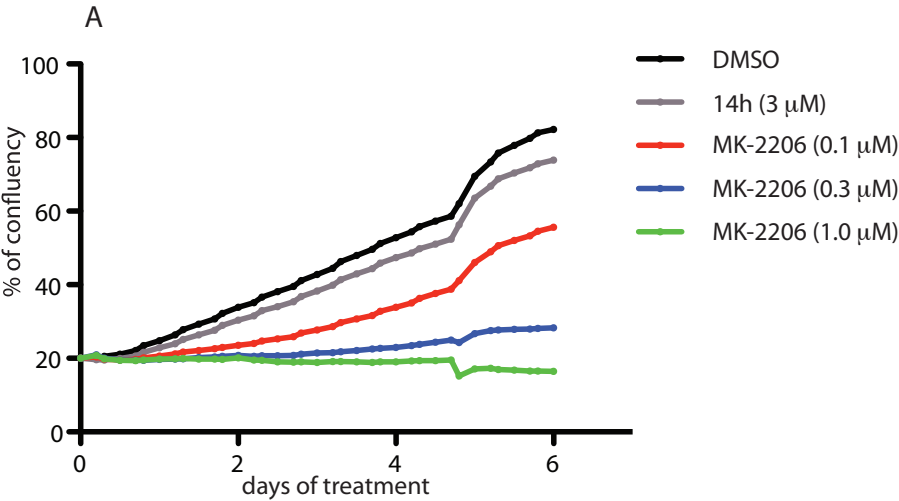
Supplementary Figure 6.



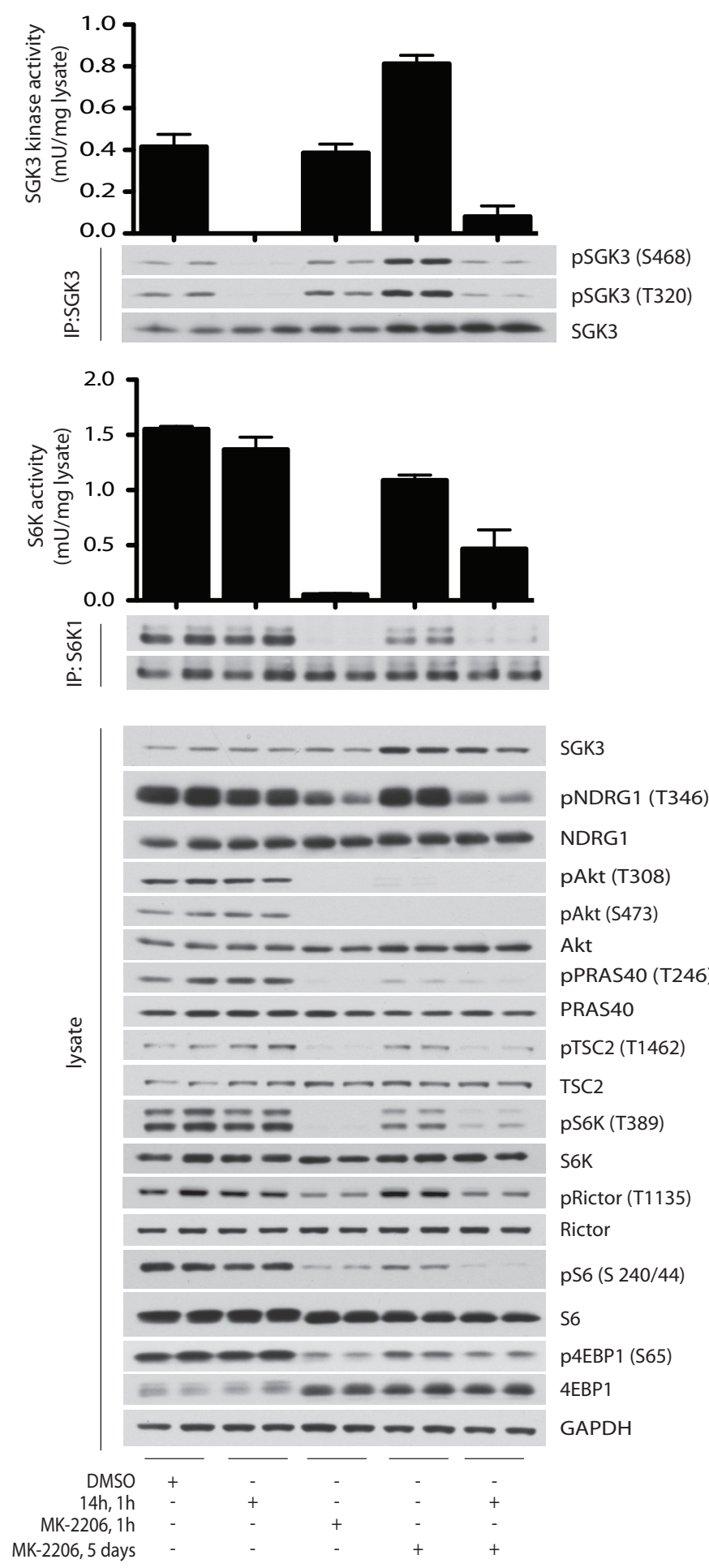
Supplementary Figure 7



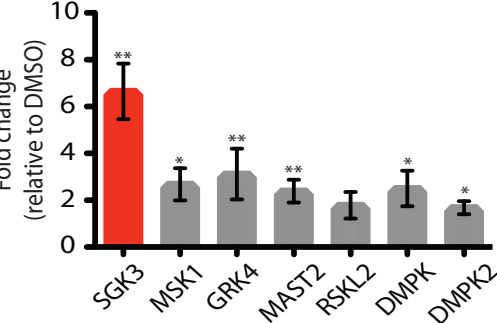
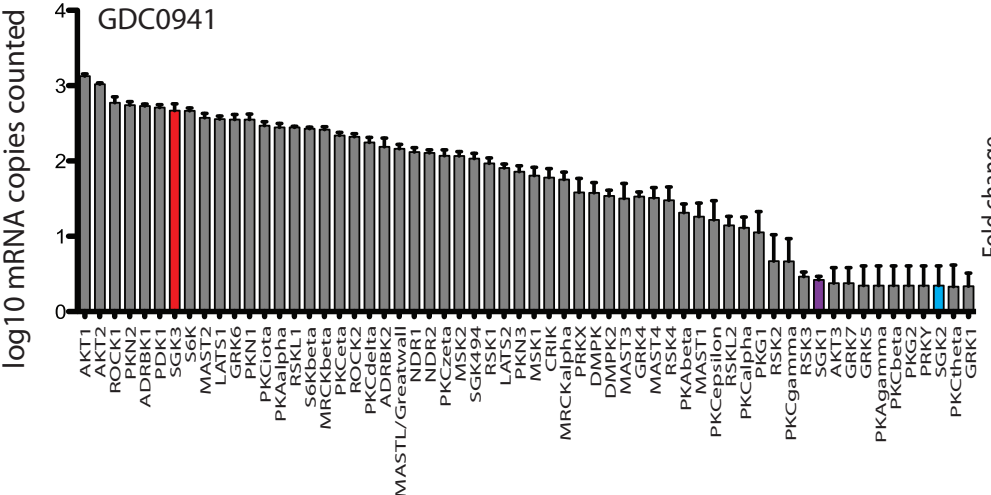
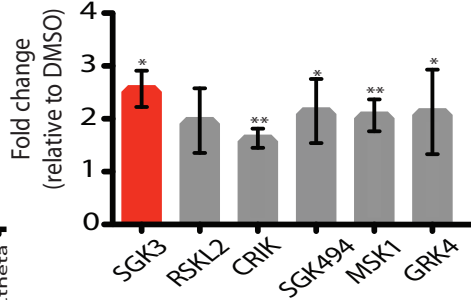
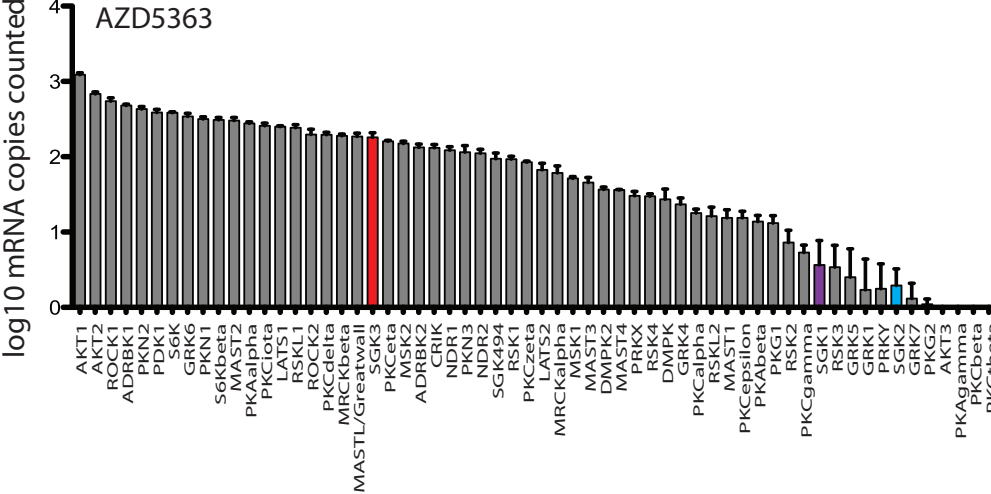
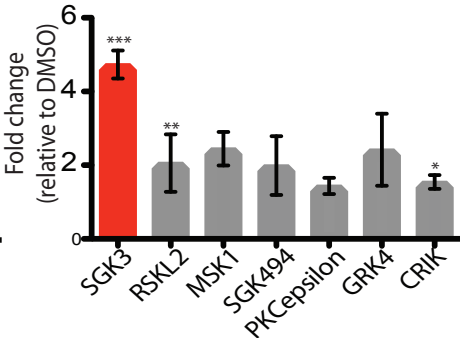
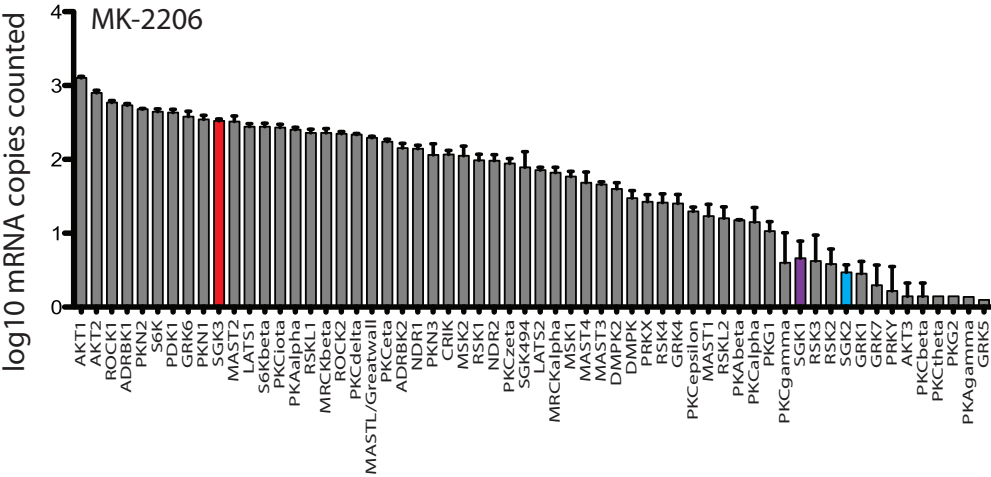
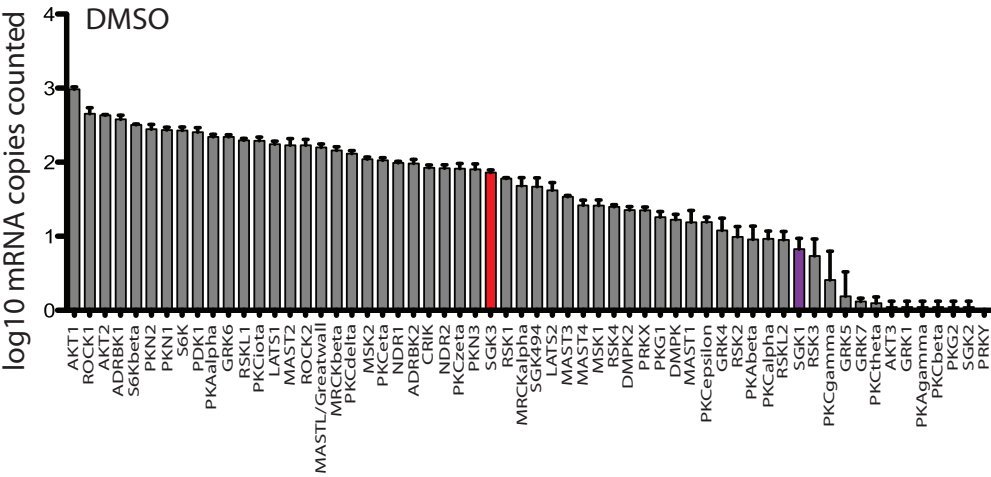
Supplementary Figure 8



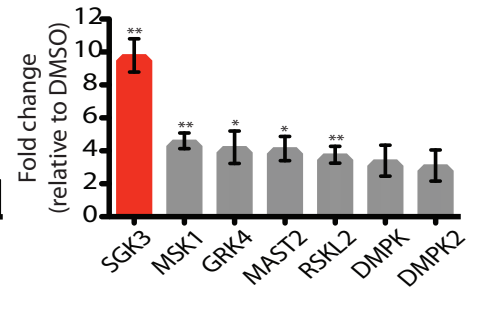
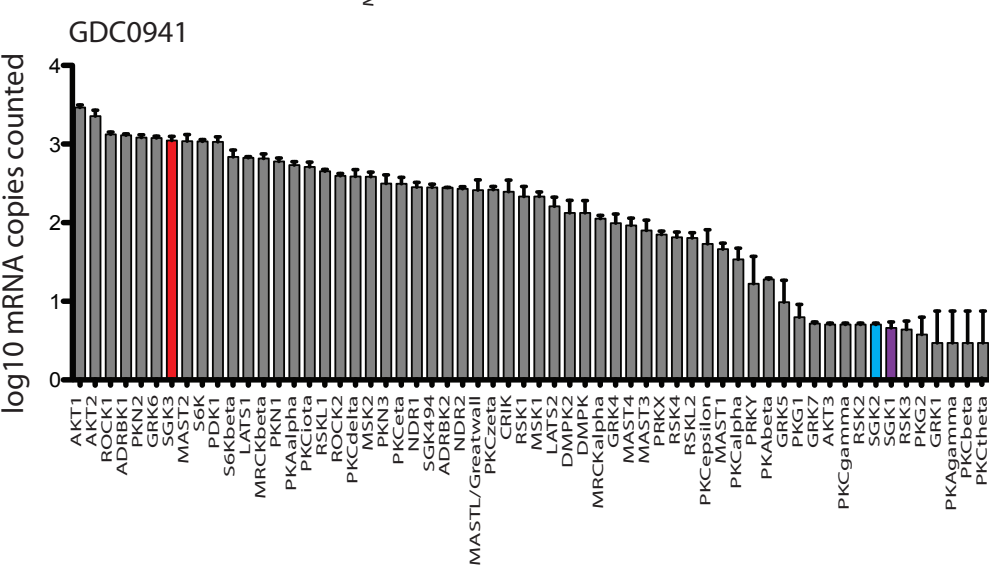
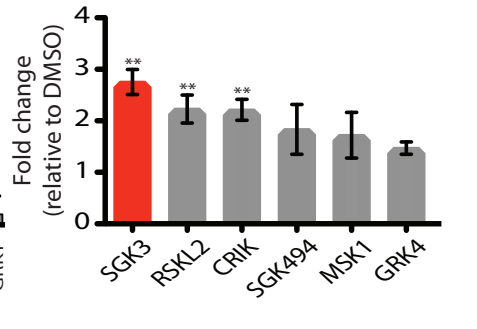
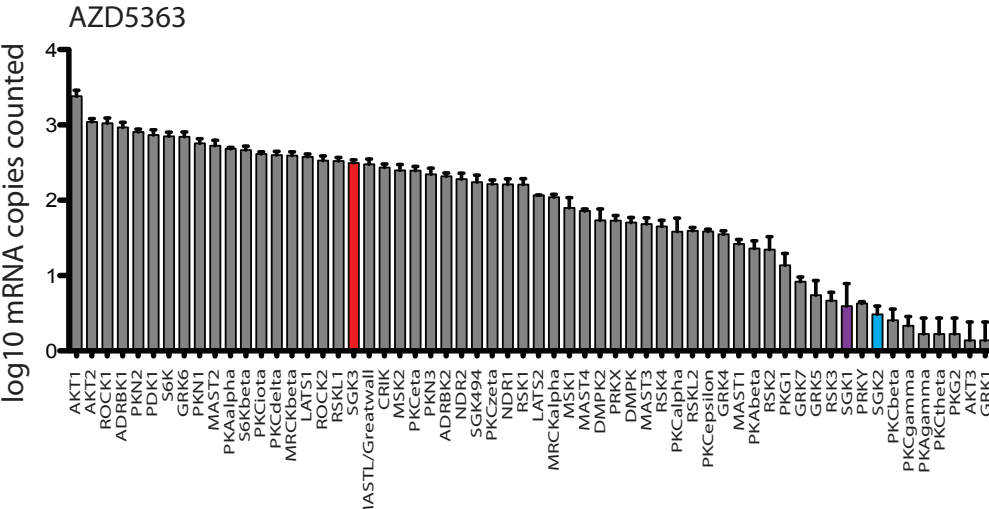
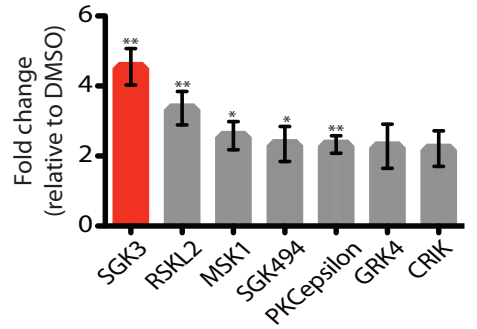
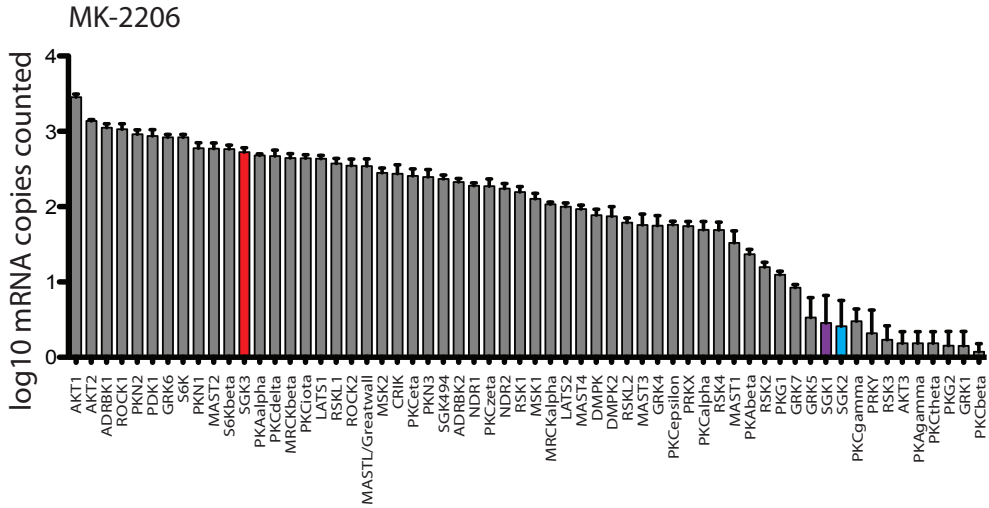
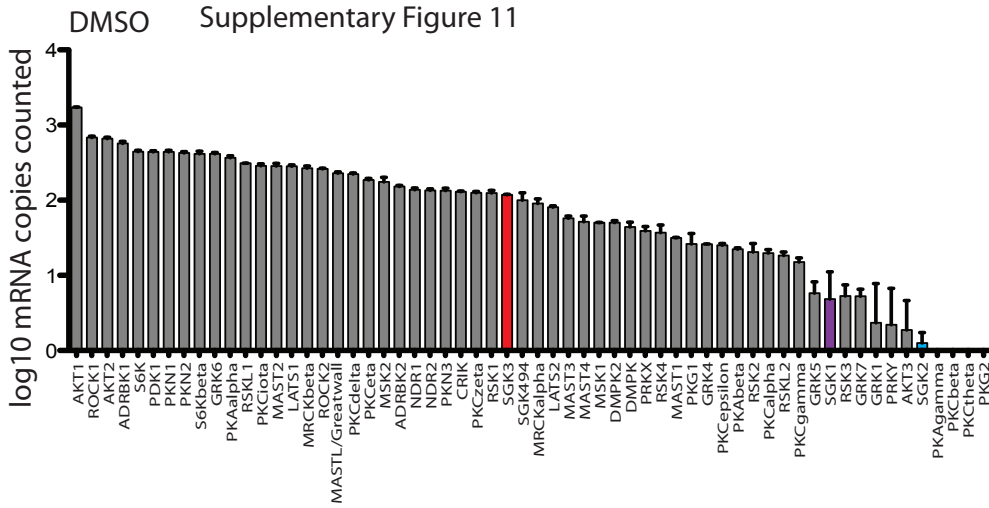
Supplementary Figure 9



Supplementary Figure 10



Supplementary Figure 11



Supplementary TABLE 1. Sanofi-14g

kinase	% activity	kinase	% activity	kinase	% activity
DYRK2	130	PRAK	107	Lck	95
MAPKAP-K3	127	NEK6	107	PKA	94
PHK	125	IKK beta	107	AMPK	94
SIK2	125	TESK1	107	YES1	94
TTBK2	124	Src	107	EPH-A2	94
CK1 delta	123	ABL	107	TrkA	93
IGF-1R	121	SYK	106	CDK2-Cyclin	92
EIF2AK3	120	ERK2	105	BTK	92
EPH-A4	120	ULK1	105	IRR	92
IR	120	HER4	105	DAPK1	91
PRK2	119	PLK1	104	TLK1	90
PKC alpha	118	MPSK1	104	ULK2	90
SRPK1	118	VEGFR1	104	p38 delta	89
ZAP70	118	ASK1	103	ROCK 2	89
PIM2	117	PINK	103	HIPK3	88
RIPK2	117	ERK5	102	PKD1	86
PDK1	116	MNK1	102	MARK2	86
PKC gamma	116	Aurora A	102	RSK2	85
CLK2	116	MARK4	102	PAK5	85
MST2	116	TSSK1	102	IRAK1	85
MAPKAP-K2	115	MKK1	101	CSK	85
SIK3	115	MKK6	101	TBK1	84
OSR1	115	p38 gamma	101	BRSK2	83
p38 alpha	114	STK33	101	ERK1	81
TTBK1	114	SmMLCK	101	TTK	81
WNK1	114	CDK9-Cyclin	101	CHK1	79
CK1 gamma	113	PIM3	101	CHK2	79
NEK2a	113	JNK1	100	MELK	79
PIM1	113	PKB alpha	100	TAK1	79
TGFBR1	113	LKB1	100	MINK1	77
JAK2	113	MARK3	100	IKK epsilon	76
EPH-B2	113	HIPK1	100	RSK1	75
FGF-R1	113	Aurora B	99	NUAK1	70
DDR2	113	PAK6	99	MAP4K3	67
MARK1	112	MST4	99	GCK	66
BRSK1	112	BRK	99	MSK1	57
IRAK4	112	EPH-B1	99	HIPK2	54
GSK3 beta	111	JNK2	98	CAMK1	42
MNK2	110	p38 beta	98	PAK4	39
CAMKK beta	110	PKB beta	98	MAP4K5	39
DYRK3	110	PKC zeta	98	ERK8	34
EF2K	110	MEKK1	98	MLK1	28
PAK2	109	MKK2	97	MLK3	15
EPH-B4	109	DYRK1A	97	TIE2	15
JNK3	108	CK2	96	SGK3	11
EPH-B3	108	TAO1	96	S6K1	9
PDGFRA	108	MST3	95	SGK1	4

Supplementary TABLE 2. Sanofi-14h

kinase	% activity	kinase	% activity	kinase	% activity
MARK1	130	WNK1	103	DYRK3	94
CSK	129	EPH-B2	103	TBK1	94
CK2	128	HER4	103	HIPK1	92
MAPKAP-K3	122	JNK3	102	MKK6	91
ASK1	121	SIK3	102	MST3	91
ERK5	119	PIM3	102	CLK2	90
p38 alpha	117	SmMLCK	101	TAO1	90
ROCK 2	117	SIK2	101	IRAK1	90
EPH-A2	117	PAK6	101	ABL	90
Src	115	SYK	101	PRK2	89
FGF-R1	115	TrkA	101	BTk	89
p38 delta	114	JNK2	100	PDGFRA	89
MAPKAP-K2	114	CAMKK beta	100	PKD1	87
MEKK1	114	Aurora A	100	PAK5	87
MPSK1	114	CK1 delta	100	ULK2	84
CHK1	112	TTBK1	100	IR	82
TLK1	112	IKK beta	100	CK1 gamma	81
PKC gamma	111	PIM2	100	EIF2AK3	81
PIM1	111	ULK1	100	TGFBR1	78
TESK1	111	BRK	100	RSK2	77
Lck	111	ERK2	99	TTK	77
EPH-A4	111	TSSK1	99	JAK2	77
TTBK2	110	MST2	99	VEGFR1	73
PAK2	110	OSR1	99	MKK1	72
ZAP70	110	EPH-B3	99	MINK1	71
PKA	109	EPH-B4	99	MKK2	70
PHK	109	PINK	99	IKK epsilon	69
DYRK2	109	PKB beta	98	MELK	67
PLK1	108	EF2K	98	CAMK1	63
SRPK1	108	HIPK3	98	NUAK1	61
IRAK4	108	EPH-B1	98	CHK2	50
PRAK	107	p38 beta	97	RSK1	48
CDK9-Cyclin	107	PKC zeta	97	PAK4	46
PKC alpha	106	MNK2	97	HIPK2	45
MARK4	106	GSK3 beta	97	TAK1	45
PKB alpha	105	LKB1	97	Aurora B	42
STK33	105	BRSK2	97	ERK8	38
DAPK1	105	IGF-1R	97	GCK	34
NEK6	105	PDK1	96	MSK1	31
IRR	105	AMPK	96	MAP4K3	25
DDR2	105	ERK1	95	MAP4K5	13
p38 gamma	104	MARK2	95	MLK1	10
MNK1	104	MARK3	95	TIE2	10
CDK2-Cyclin	104	RIPK2	95	SGK1	6
BRSK1	104	YES1	95	MLK3	6
MST4	104	JNK1	94	S6K1	3
NEK2a	103	DYRK1A	94	SGK3	3

Supplementary TABLE 3. Sanofi-14i

kinase	% activity	kinase	% activity	kinase	% activity
PIM2	134	PKC zeta	101	DYRK3	90
TTBK2	124	MAPKAP-K3	101	PKD1	88
DYRK2	123	BRSK1	100	Lck	88
PHK	122	NEK6	100	Aurora B	87
Src	121	PAK2	100	BRSK2	87
IGF-1R	119	MKK1	99	CK2	87
TGFBR1	118	ERK1	99	MARK4	86
CAMKK beta	117	ERK2	99	CDK2-Cyclin	85
LKB1	117	JNK3	99	MNK1	84
MNK2	116	PRK2	99	CSK	84
MARK1	116	p38 alpha	98	SYK	84
CK1 delta	116	CK1 gamma	98	AMPK	83
IRAK4	113	DYRK1A	98	IKK epsilon	83
MPSK1	113	PAK6	98	TLK1	82
PDK1	112	ASK1	98	MELK	81
TTBK1	112	ULK1	98	JAK2	81
ZAP70	112	EPH-A2	98	EIF2AK3	80
CDK9-Cyclin	111	EPH-A4	98	IRAK1	80
Aurora A	111	EPH-B3	98	TrkA	79
BRK	111	EPH-B4	98	HIPK1	78
IR	111	PINK	98	CHK2	75
OSR1	110	PKC gamma	97	TAO1	75
NEK2a	109	MAPKAP-K2	97	CHK1	73
PKC alpha	108	PRAK	97	TTK	70
MST2	108	CLK2	97	PAK5	68
SIK2	107	WNK1	97	MINK1	68
SIK3	107	ULK2	97	VEGFR1	68
SRPK1	107	EPH-B1	97	MST4	67
EF2K	107	EPH-B2	97	CAMK1	66
JNK2	106	ROCK 2	96	MAP4K3	66
p38 gamma	105	PLK1	96	NUAK1	65
IKK beta	105	YES1	95	TAK1	63
PIM1	105	MKK6	94	TBK1	61
TESK1	105	p38 delta	94	PDGFRA	55
PKB alpha	104	RSK1	94	HIPK3	47
GSK3 beta	104	RIPK2	94	ERK8	40
PIM3	104	HER4	94	GCK	40
ABL	104	SmMLCK	93	MAP4K5	39
DAPK1	103	RSK2	92	PAK4	32
MARK3	103	MARK2	92	MSK1	30
TSSK1	103	MEKK1	92	MLK1	24
DDR2	103	BTk	92	HIPK2	15
STK33	102	FGF-R1	92	MLK3	11
MST3	102	JNK1	91	TIE2	9
ERK5	101	p38 beta	91	S6K1	5
PKB beta	101	IRR	91	SGK1	4
PKA	101	MKK2	90	SGK3	4

Supplementary TABLE 4. Sanofi-14n

kinase	% activity	kinase	% activity	kinase	% activity
ASK1	142	DDR2	101	ZAP70	90
HER4	119	CK2	100	JNK3	89
CDK9-Cyclin	115	IRAK1	100	ULK2	89
EPH-B1	114	IRAK4	100	STK33	88
MARK3	113	CSK	100	YES1	88
PAK2	113	IRR	100	SYK	88
PRAK	112	ERK1	99	PKD1	87
MAPKAP-K3	110	PKC gamma	99	PAK6	86
DAPK1	110	ULK1	99	TBK1	83
Aurora A	110	EPH-B3	99	EIF2AK3	83
PIM2	110	p38 gamma	98	BTK	83
TLK1	109	PRK2	98	IGF-1R	82
Src	109	SIK2	98	PAK5	81
EPH-B4	109	EF2K	98	MKK2	80
FGF-R1	109	MST3	98	MNK1	80
TESK1	108	IR	98	TGFBR1	80
RIPK2	108	CHK1	97	JAK2	80
EPH-A2	108	DYRK1A	97	VEGFR1	80
TrkA	108	NEK2a	96	RSK2	79
TTBK2	107	HIPK1	96	MNK2	79
PINK	107	GSK3 beta	95	AMPK	79
MARK1	106	CK1 gamma	95	MELK	78
ROCK 2	105	DYRK3	95	MKK1	77
PHK	105	MST2	95	TAO1	77
MARK2	105	OSR1	95	MINK1	75
ABL	105	MKK6	94	PDGFRA	73
JNK1	104	ERK2	94	TTK	72
PDK1	104	CAMKK beta	94	IKK epsilon	67
MAPKAP-K2	104	BRSK1	94	CHK2	64
SmMLCK	104	SIK3	94	NUAK1	64
MEKK1	104	TSSK1	94	HIPK2	64
EPH-B2	104	EPH-A4	94	RSK1	56
PIM1	103	PKB alpha	93	CAMK1	56
BRK	103	PLK1	93	ERK8	51
PKB beta	102	MARK4	93	PAK4	47
PKA	102	SRPK1	93	MSK1	41
PKC alpha	102	MPSK1	93	Aurora B	39
CK1 delta	102	p38 alpha	92	MAP4K3	39
IKK beta	102	p38 beta	92	TAK1	38
HIPK3	102	PIM3	92	GCK	34
MST4	102	PKC zeta	91	MAP4K5	34
WNK1	102	BRSK2	91	TIE2	10
ERK5	101	NEK6	91	MLK1	8
CDK2-Cyclin	101	JNK2	90	SGK1	6
TTBK1	101	p38 delta	90	MLK3	6
DYRK2	101	LKB1	90	S6K1	2
Lck	101	CLK2	90	SGK3	2